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THE
CHRISTIAN
INVESTIGATOR,
AND
EVANGELICAL REFORMER;

FOR THE
PROMOTION OF SOUND RELIGIOUS KNOWLEDGE,
AND THE
INCULCATION OF TEMPERANCE AND PEACE,
AND OF
THE WHOLE RELIGION OF CHRIST.

VOLUME FIRST.

BY JOSEPH BARKER,
AND OTHERS.

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THE

CHRISTIAN INVESTIGATOR,

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EVANGELICAL REFORMER;

For the Promotion of sound Religious Knowledge, and the Inculcation of Temperance and Peace; and of the whole Religion of Christ.

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A CALL TO INVESTIGATION.

We desire to present to those who shall read this, our first number of the *Christian Investigator*, such a statement of our intentions and objects, as shall enlist on its behalf their holiest sympathies, their active and generous support, and their most fervent prayers.

As the title indicates, one object—a *leading object* of our periodical, is INVESTIGATION: investigation, in a Christian disposition, and on Christian principles, of matters pertaining to Christianity. More particularly—this object is, to excite in the visible Church of Christ, such an amount of sanctified inquiry, as shall result in a speedy, extensive, and persevering effort for the restoration of primitive purity, union, and power.

We are tremblingly sensible that no human might or wisdom is "sufficient for these things." But *our sufficiency is of God*, and we frankly avow, that we therefore entertain a steadfast expectation that success will crown our efforts.

Once, the visible church *was* pure, united, and efficient. It was *pure*,—the members of it "were all filled with the Holy Ghost," and "great grace was upon them all." It was *united*,—its members were "of one heart and of one soul," and "all that believed were together, and had all things common." And it was *efficient*,—"The word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly."—"And believers were the more added unto the Lord, multitudes both of men and women." A heavenly community! Justly was the advent of its founder honoured by the angels' anthem,—"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, and goodwill towards men." Justly were the tidings of his birth called "glad tidings of great joy;" and full of consolation were the concluding words—"*which shall be to all people.*"

But another truth was, shortly afterwards, revealed. The progress to all people, of these glad tidings of great joy, should be hindered for a season. A "falling away" should take place, "The mystery of iniquity" should be prevalent, "The man of sin" should be revealed, "sitting in the temple, in the church of God;" and, "because iniquity should abound, the love of many should wax cold." Still, however, the former truth remained unshaken; and still each messenger of Jesus might exclaim, "Behold! I bring you glad tidings of great joy, which *shall be to all people.*" But more than eighteen ages of the Christian dispensation have elapsed, and the world is still unsaved. Its inhabitants, a very *little flock* excepted, are still thronging the broad way,—"far distant from the living God, as far as hell from heaven." And this is not the worst! The appointed instrument of the world's salvation—the *visible church*, as now existing, is manifestly inefficient for the task. In accordance with the sure word of prophecy, a "falling away" did take place, the "mystery of iniquity did work, the "man of sin" was revealed "in the Temple of God." Iniquity did abound, and the love of many did wax cold. And the church has never yet regained its primitive character. The last four centuries, indeed, have witnessed some improvement, and this is cause for gratitude and hope. But however much of doctrinal truth has been recovered, and greatly improved as the moral aspect of the church has been, during these centuries, it has by no means regained the love, and union, and power, it once possessed.

The reformation which commenced about four centuries ago, and which has been carried on under various names and by various communities, may perhaps be spoken of as *but commenced*. The Christian *city*, destined indeed to be "exalted above all hills," is, as to its general aspect, still in ruins. The Christian *temple* is by no means purged. The Christian *army* is by no means ready for its contest with the powers of earth and hell. It is broken into parties and factions. There is civil war, instead of opposition to the common foe. A large proportion of the soldiers know nothing of their duty, and are unconcerned to know it. And those who seem desirous to know it are not agreed respecting it. And though various companies have been gathered under various leaders, which for awhile have exhibited some discipline, and gained some recruits, yet even these hitherto have generally sunk, ere long, into indifference and inactivity. Nay, what is worse, these also, have frequently been torn asunder by internal strife; whilst the disorganized hosts around them have exulted in their ruin. Thus have centuries been well nigh lost!

The most appalling consequences are following these varied evils. A reaction has commenced,—a reaction in favour of errors long since abandoned. Many minds are doubting truths which hitherto they have steadfastly believed; and some have actually abandoned truth altogether. Others, after witnessing the distracted condition of the church, year after year, and vainly hoping for brighter prospects, begin to think that Christianity is not destined to triumph by human instrumentality. These are a swiftly-increasing party. Thousands, who but recently believed that ere long our holy religion would manifest its original character and power, and that this heavenly leaven would "leaven the whole lump," are giving up this confidence, and receiving *Millennarian* notions. They now begin to think that a *second personal advent* of the Messiah is indispensable to the world's conversion. Meantime the hosts of earth and hell are looking on in triumph. The opponents of the truth are waxing bold. The "man of sin" is taking courage, and a revival of effort is excited, and activity, worthy of holier enterprise, may be witnessed in all parts of his dominions. Even the *fools* lift up their voices, and, in contemplation of the scene, exclaim, "There is no God." Nay more, they actually unite themselves together, and in the madness of their *folly* aspire to teach the Christians how to love, and how to live!

Such is the church, and such the world, notwithstanding those gleams of heavenly light which may here and there be witnessed, and which, even amidst the general and gathering gloom, we trust, are brightening.

Here, Christian reader, commences our inquiry. We ask, "is there not a cause," and *is there not a remedy* for all this? "Is there no balm in Gilead, is there no physician there? Why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?" Such is one part of the investigation to which we desire to call the attention of those who bear the name of Christ. We purpose to devote a portion of the *Christian Investigator* to the examination of this momentous question, in all its bearings—primary and more remote. On addressing ourselves to our task, we implore the illumination and assistance of the Holy Spirit, that we may write only the words of truth and soberness: and we shall write, if the Lord will, from time to time, with all sincerity and plainness of speech.

Our subject will suggest the following, among a variety of other topics, for consideration. We shall notice them in that order which at the time may appear most lucid and natural.

1. Is the religion of Jesus Christ indeed destined to become the religion of the world?

2. Is the Christian system—the system of means and agencies, developed in the New Testament, for promoting Christianity, indeed efficient for the conversion of the world? Or,

3. Is there any scriptural or reasonable grounds for the conclusion, that other means and agencies, (such as a second personal advent of Christ) will be needed and employed?

4. If the instrumentality of the church is destined to convert the world, have we evidence of its present fitness for the task? If not, it will be necessary to inquire,

5. Did not the *primitive* church evince all the influence, activity, and perseverance that may, "speaking as men," be deemed requisite?

6. Is there any intimation given in the Scriptures, that the Christian religion would, *necessarily*, in succeeding ages, lose any of its power: that the experience and practice of Christians should *necessarily* degenerate; and that strife, and division, and inefficiency should mark the character of the church?

7. Is there, at present, any insurmountable obstacle to an immediate return to primitive purity, both of heart and life, by the members of the church?

8. Why, after nearly four centuries have been spent in professed reformation, has not such a return been generally effected?

9. Why have *modern* revivals of religion, generally, been limited as to their influence, and transient in their duration?—How is it that after every period of renewed spiritual life and energy, and of consequent success, a state of indifference, inactivity, and declension in piety and zeal, has generally, if not universally, succeeded?—Thus not only arresting the progress of the *revival*, but undoing all, or a great part of, the good work that had been accomplished.

10. Does not the temporary and transient character of revivals, *if essentially connected with them*, take away all ground of hope for the world's conversion, by the ordinary means? But,

11. *Are* revivals of religion necessarily "transient as to their duration, and limited as to their influence?"—Does not Christianity furnish a remedy for this most distressing, most discouraging, and most fatal defect, in the modern operations of Christian communities? If so,

12. Is it not solemnly incumbent on every community, on every congregation, and on every individual, promptly to apply the remedy?

13. *What is that remedy?*—what is it that shall give permanent and perpetually-increasing influence and success, to a revival of religion? By what means shall the "little leaven" now in the world, leaven the whole moral lump? Lastly. What may and must each member of the church become,—what may and must each *be* and *do*, in order to acceptable and effectual co-operation with the God of all grace, in the accomplishment of his glorious designs?

And now we have to invite our Christian readers to accompany us in our search after a satisfactory answer to each of the questions which have been proposed. These are by no means matters of cold and unprofitable speculation, or idle curiosity; they are full of intense interest,—they affect the destiny, both temporal and eternal, of all the existing millions of the human race, and of "ten thousand times ten thousand" millions yet unborn. We hope to present to those who do accompany us, such information as will, at least, repay them. And we invite *assistance*. We ask for a free and dispassionate expression of the opinions of our friends, whether in unison with our own, or opposed to them; and for the kind communication of all such facts and reasonings, as may appear calculated to elicit and establish truth.

In conclusion, we most affectionately ask our readers, whom we have previously called "*Christian readers*," are you such? We desire to ask of each, *Reader, are you a Christian?* We ask not, are you *called* a Christian? We ask not, do you profess the Christian faith? We ask, *are you* a Christian? "Have you received the Holy Ghost?" Have you received, "not the spirit of bondage again to fear, but the spirit of adoption, enabling you to cry, Abba, Father? If not, we say, in all affection and sincerity, you are not yet prepared to accept our invitation. *For you* one thing is needful." First of all, we entreat you, give yourself to God. Seek, oh! seek the knowledge of him "whom to know is life eternal." For the present, let your sole inquiry be, "what must I do to be saved?" If you will but make *this* your inquiry, you most certainly shall have a speedy answer. Then, having found salvation for yourself, and not until then, can you duly understand the evils which exist around you.

We purpose to commence the series of articles, to which this is introductory, in our next number.

* * *

THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

THE present age seems to me to be distinguished from former ages in three important particulars: its inquiring spirit, its utilitarian character, and its reforming tendency. It is well for Christians to understand the spirit of the age in which they live, that they may so regulate their conduct, as to render that spirit subservient to the great objects for which God has called them into being.

The first great peculiarity of the present period, is the restless spirit of inquiry which so extensively prevails. There have been times when for centuries the spirit of inquiry seemed to be completely dormant; opinions descended like estates from father to son; institutions that had existed for a length of time were deemed so sacred that no man was at liberty to question their utility or dispute their worth; and when the fact, that any doctrine was maintained, or any practice sanctioned by the priest, was deemed sufficient to prove that doctrine true, and that practice right. The iron yoke of the feudal system entered into men's souls, and the galling bondage of Popish superstition rendered their degradation complete; and by the conjoint influence of the two, men were transformed from free, intelligent, thinking beings, into the tools of an ungodly, ambitious priesthood, and the abject slaves of an unjust, tyrannical oligarchy. Civil and religious society were both divided into castes or classes; and it was regarded as the prerogative of the one, to dictate, and the duty of the other, to submit; one class regarded themselves as entitled to command,—the other believed themselves bound to obey. Inquiry was prohibited on pain of death; and indications of any disposition to act freely, were sure to be followed by the severest penalties that the rulers could inflict. For hundreds of years did this state of things continue; and it seemed as though the heaven-born spirits of men, designed for light and liberty and bliss, were always to be held in darkness and slavery and woe.

But these ages of gloom and bondage have passed away. Centuries ago, the Gospel was brought forth from the cells and cloisters in which it had been concealed; the printing press multiplied copies of the Scriptures by thousands: men began to read, to think, to examine for themselves; darkness fled at the approach of day; and the chains of civil and religious bondage were both broken at once. It is true that the instruments of this happy change suffered greatly in their struggles for liberty and truth: many of them lost their lives in the conflict. But they neither lived nor died in vain. Their memories will be revered as long as the world itself endures: and the mention of their names, and the recital of their sufferings, will inspire with a love of freedom thousands yet unborn. It is true that the work is not complete; that all are not emancipated from the yoke of unauthorized, anti-christian authority: but the work has been proceeding ever since the period to which I have referred. Each succeeding age has witnessed the removal of restrictions on freedom of thought, or liberty of conscience; and the present age is distinguished above all others by its spirit of bold, and fearless, and untiring investigation. Men seem to be determined to think for themselves at last; and nothing less than evidence,—clear, sound, convincing evidence—will satisfy them now as to the excellence of any system that may be proposed for their adoption, or the truth of any statement that may be urged on their belief.

Let it be understood that I speak of the general spirit and character of the age. There are of course exceptions, and these exceptions, in the aggregate, may be numerous; but still the general spirit of the age is as it has been described. There are individuals still, who, appearing to be unconscious of any power or right to judge for themselves, are willing that others should judge for them; and there are those who plead for a return to the worst peculiarities of the Popish system; who would extinguish the right of private judgment, and have men to form their opinions on all religious subjects according to the dictates of their teachers. But still these are the exceptions; and the deep, decided disapprobation of such sentiments as those last adverted to, expressed by the public, shows clearly that the public mind is embued with a love of liberty, and that men cannot, as formerly, be hoodwinked and led blindfold at pleasure. No, the inquiry now is, not what a certain class of men believe and teach, but what is truth? And nothing is regarded as too sacred to be made the subject of inquiry. A sentiment may have generally obtained from time immemorial; but its antiquity does not screen it from investigation. The inquiry, Is it true? is considered to be as applicable to it as to any other point. A doctrine may be very generally, nay, almost universally held; but its extensive prevalence cannot prevent investigation. Any man who doubts it, claims the right to express his doubts; and the public awards that right: "Let the man be heard," is the prevailing cry. A system may be upheld by the support of a great many intelligent, and wealthy, and influential men; but neither the talent, the wealth, nor the authority of its supporters can protect it from the most rigid scrutiny, in the present day. Men have learnt that intelligence is not confined to a class; that rich men are not infallible; that the influence and authority of those who support any given system, constitute no guarantee for its truth; and they claim the right of inquiry. "But you must not inquire," say some who are interested in upholding things as they are: "The subject is too sacred for inquiry: God has pronounced the doctrine true, and all inquiry is thereby precluded." Not so, say the thinkers of the present day. We do not wish to inquire whether what God says be true: but we do claim the right to inquire what it is that God says. We know that a doctrine pronounced as true by Heaven, must be true; but the object of our inquiry is, to determine whether Heaven has pronounced the doctrine in question true. You say that it is so; but that is not enough; we must see, and hear, and judge for ourselves, and then we shall be content. Such is the first characteristic of the spirit of the age.

And what are the lessons that Christians should learn from a consideration of this state of things? I answer, we should learn to treat men as reasonable beings; to expect blind submission, and implicit faith, no longer; to expect conviction no further than we furnish evidence, and to expect compliance only in proportion to the weight of the motives we adduce. Men have been treated like children too long; and after they have asserted their claim to be regarded and treated as men in all other matters, they have still submitted to be dealt with as children in matters of religion. But they are now awaking to a consciousness of their rights and capabilities here also; they are hearkening to the apostolic injunction, "in understanding be men." And if we are to plead the cause of truth and holiness successfully now, we must bear in mind that we are addressing men. Authority might awe the child; reasoning and persuasion must move the man. If you would have him believe your doctrines, you must prove them true; if you would have him to adopt your course, you must show him that that course is best.

The Gospel is adapted to the condition and capacities of mankind in the most advanced stage of intellectual cultivation. It invariably appeals to men as rational, reflecting beings. It asks not their acquiescence in a moment of excitement, when under the impulse of violent emotions. No, it calls them to retirement, to reflection, to deep, serious consideration. It lays before them the evidences of its Divine original, and asks them to weigh those evidences well. It spreads before them the character of God, and solicits their attention to its boundless excellencies. It shows them in all their spirituality and extent, the requirements of Jehovah's law; and appealing to the sense of moral rectitude that God has implanted within them by his Spirit, asks if these requirements are not just? It describes the sad results of disobedience to God's law, and referring them to what they see around them, inquires if the description be not correct? It tells the wondrous tale of redeeming love, and asks if the provisions of the redeeming plan are not alike honourable to God and replete with blessings to mankind? It states the conditions of salvation, and leaves it for the consciences of men to determine whether these conditions be not reasonable, just, and gracious? It acquaints them with the relations they sustain to each other, and urges them to the cultivation of brotherly dispositions, and to the performance of kind and brotherly deeds. It opens out before them the prospects of immortality; shows them that the steps they take must exert an influence on their eternal destiny; and urges them to act, not on the foolish maxims of earthly prudence, but with an eye to eternal consequences. By motives and considerations drawn from the divinity of its own origin, the boundless perfections of God, the equity and excellence of his laws, the terrible nature and sad results of sin, the wonders of redeeming mercy, the terms on which men become personally interested in its blessings, the relations they sustain to each other, and to an unending state of existence, the Gospel seeks to induce men to learn its lessons, to embrace its principles, and to act according to its directions. From first to last it treats man like a being capable of thinking, of examining, and of judging for himself. And if we are to promote the spread of Gospel truth, *we* must do so too. We must make ourselves acquainted with its evidences; we must study its principles; we must trace its influence; we must imbibe its spirit; we must conform our practice to its requirements; and by manifestation of the truth, we must commend ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.

The means by which some professors of religion have sought to maintain and propagate their sentiments, are as much opposed to the spirit of the Gospel, as they are uncongenial to the spirit of the age in which we live. All intimidation and persecution, all craft and earthly policy, are contrary both to the spirit and letter of the Gospel. And they are as unsuitable to the times in which we live, as they are improper and unchristian in themselves; and those institutions and systems which can be sustained by no better means than these, must inevitably perish. Already their days are numbered; and the fabrics which have been reared on such a foundation, already totter to their base. Truth needs no such measures to support it; the Gospel spurns all alliance either with earthly influence or earthly authority. The secular arm,—the aid and countenance of rich worldly men,—splendid magnificent structures,—the attractions of music,—the charms of oratory,—these, and a thousand other kinds of earthly influence may be requisite for the support of error and superstition; but the Gospel needs them not. Nay, those who would use such means in support of the Gospel, only obscure its lustre, and impair its efficiency. All that it asks of its advocates is plain truth, and a consistent life: all that it solicits from those to whom it is addressed, is a calm, and serious, and impartial consideration of its claims. More than this it does not need; more than this it will not accept. All attempts to fetter men's minds, and subject them to the influence of low, selfish, worldly considerations, it repudiates and rejects; adopting as its motto, "LET EVERY MAN BE FULLY PERSUADED IN HIS OWN MIND. PROVE ALL THINGS; HOLD FAST THAT WHICH IS GOOD. FOR THE WEAPONS OF OUR WARFARE ARE NOT CARNAL, BUT MIGHTY THROUGH GOD."

My fellow-Christians, let us act on these lofty, noble principles. Let us never stoop to an alliance with earthly influence or power. Let us never depend either on numbers, or wealth, or rank, or eloquence, or any thing but the power of truth, and the power of God. Let us seek a perfect knowledge of Jehovah's will, and let us never rest till we are perfectly conformed to its requirements. Let us seek by earnest believing prayer the promised influence of the Almighty Spirit. Arrayed in light and strength from above, let us go forth to combat the prejudices, correct the errors, and reform the lives of men. Let us exercise our own minds, and call upon others to exercise theirs. Let us manifest in all things the kind and forbearing spirit of the Gospel, and show that we wish not to be lords over God's heritage, but helpers of our brethren's joy. Let us by all means encourage the spirit of inquiry that prevails. Let us show that Christianity does not dread, but courts investigation. Striving to attain the utmost heights of intelligence and piety and benevolence ourselves, let us endeavour to draw all others after us. But let the only influence we use to draw them, be the influence of knowledge and holiness and love. God will smile upon our efforts ; God will prosper our endeavours. A new, a happier state of things shall be introduced. Men shall learn to love God and love each other : to bear with each other's mistakes, and promote each other's welfare ; and love to God and love to man shall fill the earth with an abundant and glorious harvest of delight. * *

To be continued in the next number.

HOW TO BRING ABOUT BETTER DAYS.

An Extract from Dr. Dick on the Moral Improvement of Mankind.

"Is it inquired, *when* we expect the millennium to commence ?" I reply, *just when we please.* Are we *willing* that it should commence in the present age ? We have the *means* in our power if we choose to apply them. In the course of forty years from this date the millennium might not only be commenced, but in a rapid progress towards the summit of its glory,—*provided we were willing at this moment to concentrate all our moral and intellectual energies, and to devote all our superfluous wealth,* * * * * *to the furtherance of this object.* Nay, in the course of half that period, we should have a generation rising up in knowledge and holiness, far superior to any race which has appeared in the world during the ages that are past. For were we just now to commence a universal system of infant instruction, and continue the course through all the higher departments formerly specified—in the course of twenty years all the children who are now about two years of age (if continued in life) would have arrived at the age of twenty-two in an enlightened and moralized state, and would form the most numerous and influential portion of the population, and give a tone to all ranks of society. Even the *physical aspect* of the globe, within the course of another century, might be renovated and adorned with every thing that is beautiful and sublime. The wealth that has been expended in the madness of *warfare,* even by *civilized* nations, during a century past, had it been appropriated to philanthropic improvements, would have been sufficient to have cultivated all the desolate waste of our globe, to have made its wildernesses like Eden, and its deserts "like the garden of the Lord,"—in short, to have transformed it into something approaching to a terrestrial paradise. We have it in our power to accomplish all this in the century to come, if we are *willing* to devote our energies and our treasures to the purposes of philanthropy and general benevolence.

But is it of any avail to address the majority of our fellow-men on this subject ? No : we might as soon speak to the tides and currents of the ocean, and expect them to stop at our command, as to expect that the current of licentiousness, folly, ambition, and avarice, in which three-fourths of mankind are carried headlong, will stop its course, and diverge into the channel of religion, philanthropy and beneficence. But I trust there is still a select band of Christian Philanthropists who only require to be convinced of the necessity of extraordinary exertion, and to receive an additional stimulus, in order to excite them to a God-like liberality.

What sacrifice would it be to a man who has £500 a year to devote annually £100 to the purposes of religious and intellectual improvement ? to another who has £1000 a-year to devote £300, and to another who has £10,000 to allot £4000 *annually* for the same object ?

It would not deprive any one of them either of the necessaries or of the luxuries of life, or of anything that contributes to comfort, honour, or sensitive enjoyment. It is now high time that the sincerity of a profession of Christianity should be tried by the test of pounds, shillings, and dollars. We have beheld numerous instances of ministers and others aspiring after the highest stations and largest salaries, in order to increase their incomes. Let us now see what sacrifices they will make of the wealth which God has given them for the purpose of promoting his glory in the world. Let us see whether God or Mammon, whether the promotion of the best interests of mankind, or "the lust of the flesh and the pride of life," rule supreme in their hearts. That man who refuses to come forward with his wealth, when it is proved to be requisite for the purposes alluded to, ought not to assume the name of a *Christian.* He has never felt the influence of that divine maxim of our Saviour, "It is more blessed to *give* than to receive." He virtually declares that "laying up treasures on earth," providing fortunes for his family, keeping up a certain rank in society, and living in luxurious abundance, are matters of far greater importance than the approach of the Millennium, and the regeneration of the world. If a man is in doubt with respect to the existence of religious principle in his soul, I know not a better test than this, by which to try the sincerity of his Christian profession: is he willing, at the call of God, to give up a portion of his possessions to his service, and even to "forsake all" to prove himself "a follower of Christ?" There is a certain class of religionists who are continually whining about the low state of religion, and the wickedness that prevails among all ranks: and there is another class, who are frequently talking about the *calculations* that have been made respecting the *predicted period* of the "latter-day glory;" but when you ask any of these classes to put their hands in their pockets, in order to supply means for improving society, and hastening the approach of that glory, they will rebound from you as the north poles of two magnets rebound from each other, and will tell you, with an air of apathy and spiritual pride, "that the spirit is not yet poured out, that man can do nothing of himself, and that God's time is not yet come." If Christians were universally to act upon such views, the predicted glory of future ages would never be realized. "It is not for us to know the times and the seasons which the Father hath reserved in his own power,"—but we know that it is our *present duty* to consecrate to the service of God, and the good of mankind, all the powers and faculties with which we are invested, all the energies we are capable of exerting, and all the treasures not essential to our comfort, to carry forward the building of the Spiritual Temple, and to "prepare the way of the Lord."

In short, it is now more than time that true Christians were rising above the false maxims of the world, the calculating spirit of commerce, the degrading views of the sons of avarice, and the pursuit of earthly honours and distinctions, and acting in conformity to the noble character by which they wish to be distinguished. *Let them come forward in the face of the world, and declare by their conduct, and their noble generosity, that while they enjoy and relish the bounties of the Creator, they despise the vain pageantry of fashionable life, with all its baubles, and are determined to consecrate to rational and religious objects all the superfluities of wealth which have been hitherto devoted to luxury and pride.* Every Christian hero should be distinguished in society (whether he be sneered at or applauded by the men of the world,) by his determined opposition to worldly principles and maxims—by his abhorrence of avarice—by his active exertions in the cause of philanthropy—and by the liberal portion of his substance which he devotes to the cause of education and religion; and the church ought to exclude from her pale all who refuse, in this way, to approve themselves the disciples of Jesus. Better have a church composed of a select band of a hundred "right hearted men," ardent, generous, and persevering, than a thousand lukewarm professors, who are scarcely distinguishable from the world, and who attempt to serve both God and Mammon. Such a select band of Christian heroes, in different parts of the universal church, "shining as lights in the world, in the midst of a perverse generation," and exerting all their influence and power in counteracting ignorance and depravity, and promoting the diffusion of every branch of useful knowledge, would do more to prepare the way for the approach of the Millennium, than ten times the number of a mixed multitude of professing Christians, who are sunk into a state of apathy, and have little more of religion than the name. Their influence would be powerful in every circle in which they moved—they would make the rich professors of religion ashamed of their parsimony and their indolence—they would induce the lukewarm Christian either to come cheerfully forward with his wealth and influence, or give up the profession of religion altogether, and take his stand at once among the men of the world; and they would stimulate the young generation around them to consecrate the vigour of their lives to such holy activities. They would doubtless be sneered at by the licentious, the avaricious, and the gay; and even by the proud and wealthy ecclesiastic, who has never imbibed the spirit of a Neff or an Oberlin; but every one who is conscious that "his witness is in Heaven, and his record on high, will look down with a becoming indifference on the scorn of such men, and hold on his way rejoicing."—"Who, then, is a wise man among us, and endowed with knowledge"—"to whom God hath given riches, and the power to use them?"—*let him come forward with his stores of knowledge, and his treasures of wealth, and dedicate them to the service of the Most High; and bring along with him a few more congenial minds to embark in the same undertaking, and great shall be his reward.* "For they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever."

LOVE TO CHRIST.

So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee. He saith to him, Feed my lambs. He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my Sheep. He saith unto him, the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my Sheep.—JOHN xxi. 15-17.

Two things are taught us in the text, first, that it is our duty to love Jesus Christ; and, secondly, that if we *do* love Christ, we ought to show our love by feeding his lambs, and feeding his sheep.

1. We are taught by the text, in the first place, that it is our duty to love Jesus Christ. The same lesson is taught us in several other passages of the New Testament. In Matt. x., 37, 38, the Saviour says, "He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me." The Apostle, in Eph. vi. 24, speaks of all true Christians as "those who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity." So the Apostle Peter, in 1 Pet. i. 8, after speaking of the glory and sufferings of Christ, says, "Whom having not seen ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory." And on one occasion, 1 Cor. xvi. 22, the Apostle used these solemn words, "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema maranatha."

The sacred Scriptures not only teach us that it is our duty to love Jesus Christ, but present to our minds the *claims* which he has upon our love. Christ is set forth in the Scriptures as every way worthy of our love, and as worthy of the highest love that we can render. Christ is entitled to our love, in the first place, on account of the excellence and glory of his character; and, in the second place, on account of what he has done for us, and the inestimable blessings which he has bestowed on us.

I. Christ is entitled to our love, in the first place, on account of the excellence and glory of his character. Christ is set forth in the sacred Scriptures as the loveliest of all beings. Many noble and lovely characters are presented to our view in sacred history, but Christ is exalted above them all. Abraham was a noble character, and worthy to be remembered with affection and admiration by all the saints of God. At the call of God he left his father's house and his native land, and became a pilgrim in a strange land. Such was his confidence in the promise of God, and such his obedience to the divine commands, that he was called the Father of the Faithful, and the friend of God. Yet Christ, when conversing with the Jews, gave them to understand that he was greater than their father Abraham, and that before Abraham was *he* was.

Moses was a still greater character than Abraham, and he was employed by God in the accomplishment of the highest and most honourable undertakings that earth had ever witnessed; but even Moses was inferior to Christ. Moses was faithful as a *servant*, says the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, but Christ as a *son:* and he further intimates that Christ is worthy of as much greater honour than Moses, as he that buildeth a house is worthy of greater honour than the house itself. Jonah was ranked among the great ones by the Jews. Yet Jesus said, when speaking to the Jews, "A greater than Jonah is here." The Jews regarded Solomon as one of the first of men, especially for his wisdom; yet Christ declared, when referring to the wisdom of Solomon, "A greater than *Solomon* is here." Scarce any one stood higher in the estimation of the Jews than David, and scarce any one deserved to stand higher. He was pious from his youth, and from keeping his father's flock, he was raised to be king over Israel. Though his life was not unspotted, yet he was a truly holy man, and he was unusually favoured of God throughout his whole life. Yet Christ claimed the superiority over David. Though he acknowledged himself David's *son*, yet he claimed the honour of being David's Lord: and in the Book of Revelations Christ is called not only the *offspring*, but the *root* of David, and the bright and morning star.

One of the noblest characters mentioned in the Old Testament was Elijah. He lived at a time of general apostacy; when both the people and the priests had renounced the worship of Jehovah for the worship of idols. Instead of going with the multitude, he became the more zealous for the Lord of Hosts, and he carried his reproofs and warnings even into the palace of the king. The consequence was, that he was bitterly persecuted, but he still stood firm, and God by frequent and wonderful interpositions, preserved him from the malice of his enemies. Such was the esteem in which God held him, that instead of taking him away by death, he took him to heaven in a chariot of fire. Yet even Elijah is not placed on a level with Christ. Elijah is spoken of as a servant and attendant on Christ, and it is plainly intimated that the greatest honour that God could confer on him was, to appoint him to be the Herald, the Forerunner of Jesus.

In the New Testament we meet with still greater ones than those that we have mentioned hitherto. Christ tells us that John was *more than a prophet*, and that among them that are born of women, there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist. Yet John considered himself as nothing in comparison of Christ: he declared that he was not worthy to stoop down and unloose the shoes of the Redeemer: he regarded it as an honour too great for him to be employed as one of his humblest servants. The *Apostles* were greater than John the Baptist: the least in the kingdom of heaven was greater than he. Yet Christ is placed above the Apostles,—and above the whole family of saints, whether in heaven or in earth.

But the Scriptures do not allow us to stop here. There are beings of a higher order than men; angels that excel in strength, that inhabit the world unseen, and that rejoice in the full purity and blessedness of heaven. But Christ is placed even above the angels. The angels are dignified and faithful *ministers*, but Christ is a *son:* the angels are honourable and loyal subjects, but Christ is a king: the angels are among the first of creatures, but Christ is the creator and upholder of all things: "The brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person. And when he bringeth his only begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the Angels of God worship him." There is, therefore, no one either in earth or in heaven that can be likened unto Christ. He stands alone: he has "a name above every name;" a glory above every glory; a loveliness beyond all other loveliness: and it is appointed "that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, both of things in heaven and things an earth, and that every tongue should confess that he is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Whatever therefore is lovely in the highest, the holiest, the wisest, the mightiest, and the most honoured and favoured of creatures, whether in earth or in heaven, is to be found in Christ in fuller measures: and whatever may be the claims of the high and holy and glorified spirits of heaven to our admiration and affection, the claims of the Saviour are still higher.

But the Sacred Scriptures carry our views of the greatness and glory of the Saviour still higher. They surround him with the glories of the Godhead, and set him forth as having the same claims upon our affection and homage as God himself. It is, in fact, the doctrine of the Sacred Scriptures that Christ *is* God: that Christ and God are one. Yes, it is the doctrine of the New Testament, that while Christ was truly man, he was, nevertheless, truly God. The man Christ Jesus was the tabernacle in which the Godhead dwelt. The words of the Evangelist John on this subject are so decisive and plain, that no ingenuity of man can explain them away. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." In the person of Jesus Christ, therefore, the Godhead and Manhood were united: Christ was "Emmanuel, which, being interpreted, is, God with us." He was "God manifest in the flesh." "In him dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." The Redeemer himself knew that this was his character. He spoke in such a manner to the Jews as to leave them under the impression that he made himself equal with God. And on another occasion, he told them plainly; "I am in the Father, and the Father is in me: I and the Father are one." He told people that the words which he spoke, were the words of God: and that the works which he wrought, were the works of God. This doctrine of the divinity of Christ,—the doctrine that while Christ was man, he carried in his humanity the fulness of the Godhead,—that his humanity was the tabernacle in which the Godhead resided, and through which it shone forth and revealed its glory, is the doctrine of the whole New Testament. The Apostle Paul speaks of the Saviour as the "Image of God," as "God manifest in the flesh," as "being in the form of God, and thinking it no robbery to be equal with God:" and he declares that "by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things, says he, were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist." Col. i. 15—16.

Our obligations therefore to revere and love the Saviour are the same as our obligations to revere and love God himself. It is accordingly appointed that all men should honour the Son, "even as they honour the Father." God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name above every name, and it is ordained, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." The saints of heaven are represented as singing, "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen." "And I beheld," says John, "and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the living creatures and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands: saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. And the four living creatures said, Amen. And the four-and-twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever." It is in Christ that we see the character of God revealed in all the fulness of its glory, and it is only in proportion as we love Christ, that we can be said truly to love the Father. His loveliness is the loveliness of God himself.

But the Scriptures call on us to contemplate the Redeemer in another light, and they present us with other claims which he has upon our affection. Christ was a man,—a perfect man. He was made in the likeness of sinful flesh,—he was made in all points like as we are, yet without sin,—he was subject to human affections and infirmities,—he was born under the law,—he was subject to temptation and pain,—he had a human character, and human relationships,—he took upon himself the form of a servant, and in this light we would now call upon you to contemplate him. Viewed in this light, he still stands alone. There is a perfection and a loveliness about him, which can never be sufficiently admired, and which can never be sufficiently loved. There was not a stain upon his whole character. He did no sin, neither was any guile found in his mouth. His enemies laboured hard to find some fault in him, but their labour was in vain. They tried to catch him in his words, but they could not succeed.

It is true they laid many bad things to his charge,—and some, who were decent people, were so perplexed by the wicked reports which were circulated respecting him by his enemies, that at times they scarce knew what to think of him: but his intimate and constant friends, who were witnesses of all he did, and to whom he revealed his whole soul, declared him to be holy, harmless, and undefiled, and separate from sin and sinners. The scribes and pharisees called him a sabbath-breaker, a seditious man, a blasphemer, a gluttonous man, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners. They said he was in league with the devil; that he cast out devils by Beelzebub, the prince of devils: they said he was possessed of a devil himself, and was mad, and as if nothing might be left unsaid that it was in the power of malice to invent and utter, they actually called him Beelzebub himself, the prince of devils. But it was all false: there was not a particle of truth in the whole. The simple fact was this, he was too good for them. The very reason why they abused him so was because he was so good. There were plenty of bad men in those days, but they let them pass. And they would have let the Saviour pass, if he could have been content to join their party, and be no better than themselves. But he could do no such thing. He had come to declare the truth, and he declared it faithfully, and he enforced it by a spotless and perfect example; and this was what provoked their rage. He touched their self-importance,—he struck at the root of their earthly interests and honours, —he exposed their hypocrisy,—he trampled upon their traditions,—he refused to acknowledge their authority,—he had no selfishness, no bigotry, no intolerance about him,—he was the friend of universal man,—he thought better of a kind-hearted Samaritan, than of a cruel, selfish Jew,—in a word, he struck at the root of the power of his enemies, by giving the people right notions of God and of duty, and teaching them to think for themselves. They reproached him because he was faultless: they hated him because of his loveliness. Even Pilate himself, who heard all that his enemies witnessed against him, declared in open court, in the most solemn manner, that he found no fault in him, and his disciples have left it in record to all ages, that he was a "lamb without blemish and without spot."

But this was not all. He was not only free from all evil; he excelled in all that was good. His tempers, his words, and his whole behaviour were one consistent and affecting exemplification of purity, of piety, and of love. How humble he was! He might have been a king if he would, but he refused: he might have been attended by the rich and mighty; but he preferred the company of his poor disciples. He might have lived in palaces, and ruled men by the force of arms; but instead of that he was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief, and had not where to lay his head. He welcomed to his presence those whom the haughty scribes and pharisees would not look down upon. If men were truly penitent; if they had renounced their sins; if they were truly desirous to be reconciled to God, and to live in newness of life, it was enough for him. It mattered not how poor they were, nor how abandoned they had been; he received them into the number of his followers, and regarded them with the greatest tenderness. Look at his temperance. He made no provision for the flesh; the thought of fleshly indulgences appears never to have entered his mind. He was content with the poorest accommodations, and the homeliest fare: his meat and drink were to do the will of his Father, and to finish his work.

Look at his charity. His whole soul was love, and his whole life was one long list of benevolent labours. He was known by the name of "Jesus of Nazareth, who went about doing good." And the name was an exact description of his character. He had a heart that could feel for all that were in distress; and a hand that was always ready to afford relief. He healed the sick; he cleansed the lepers; he fed the hungry; he gave sight to the blind, and hearing to the deaf, and speech to the dumb, and feet to the lame, and life to the dead. He was especially kind to men's souls. He instructed the ignorant, he reproved the guilty, and went throughout all the cities and villages of his country, preaching and teaching the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. After he had spent the day in teaching and working miracles, he frequently passed the night in prayer. His great business on earth was to seek and to save that which was lost.

And his meekness was as great as his love. In his labours to bless mankind he met with innumerable reproaches, and with the most cruel persecutions; but nothing was able to turn him aside from his benevolent purpose, or to provoke him to wrath. When he was reviled, he reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but went meekly forward with his labours, instructing and blessing the children of men. He endured the temptations of the devil, and the cruelties of an ungodly world without a murmur. On one occasion his soul was exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death: and being in an agony, he sweat as it were great drops of blood falling to the ground. Still he murmured not. He *prayed*, it is true, and he urged his petition thrice; but deep as his affliction was, he was still resigned; and as he offered up each time his prayer, he exclaimed, "Father, not my will, but thine be done." When his agony was ended, his enemies came and laid hold of him, and dragged him to the judgment hall. There he was mocked and derided; he was buffetted and spit upon; he was derided and scourged; and, on the testimony of false witnesses, he was condemned to death: but he was still unmoved. He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. And even when they nailed him to the cross, when he hung amidst the agonies of a cruel and shameful death, his love and meekness were still unconquerable, and he prayed, even in behalf of his murderers, "Father, forgive them: they know not what they do."

Such was the character of the Redeemer considered as a man. And is there a heart that can contemplate this character without emotion? I confess that while I read the story of his sorrows, and contemplate the purity and tenderness of his character, I am melted into tears: my spirit is overwhelmed within me, and I cannot help but love. And the more I contemplate, the more am I enamoured. I can conceive nothing so lovely and affecting in the whole universe of being. It is the glory and the loveliness of heaven itself. And that heart that can contemplate the glory of the Saviour as set forth in the sacred Scriptures, and yet remain unmoved, must be fearfully degenerate. I pray God that every such unhappy soul may be converted.

But Christ has still further claims upon our love, in virtue of what he has done for us. We are, in fact, indebted to him for every thing we enjoy. We are told in the Scriptures that he made the *world;* that all things were made by him, and that without him was not any thing made that was made. We are therefore indebted to him for our very being, and for all our daily blessings. The light of the sun, the fresh air of heaven, the herbs and flowers, the blossoms and the fruits, the clouds, the mists, the showers, the woods, the streams, our rest by night, our joys by day, our life and friends, all that sustains and all that sweetens life, all are his gifts; all come as messengers of his love, and claim for him the affectionate and grateful homage of our souls. But it is as our *mediator* that we are especially called to view him; it is the work of *redemption* which gives him the principal claim upon our hearts. What is it that he has done for our redemption? We were lost in darkness and pollution; we were living without God and without hope; and we were sinking beneath a weight of guilt, into everlasting perdition. And there was none on earth to help us, and we were unable to help ourselves. It was in this wretched condition that he beheld us; and such was his love, that though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich. He clothed himself in flesh; he took on himself the form of a servant; he lived in this world of pain and sorrow; he toiled, he wept, he prayed; he became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

He has undertaken and accomplished every thing that was needful to our salvation. He has become our teacher; he has revealed to us, in all its glory, the character of God; he has unfolded to our views the mysteries of his providence; he has brought life and immortality to light; he has made plain the plan of salvation, and given us the clearest and the fullest instructions in reference to our duty. He has made our duty plain and attractive by his perfect and lovely example, and he has demonstrated the truth of his doctrine by a multitude of unparalelled miracles. He has in this way delivered us from the painful perplexities of pagan darkness, and from all the terrible apprehensions and anxieties of pagan superstition.

He has become our high priest, and made an atonement for our sins: he gave himself an offering and a sacrifice to God for the sins of men. He has become a propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but for the sins of the world. He died the just for the unjust, to bring us to God. He has thus removed the obstacle to the bestowment of pardon and peace on fallen man. God can now be just, and the justifier of the ungodly that believeth on him.

He has also become our regenerator and sanctifier. He has procured for us the Holy Ghost; and sent him forth to convince the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. By his powerful and sanctifying operations, he regenerates our souls, makes us new creatures, cleanses us from all filthiness both of the flesh and of the spirit, and makes us holy even as God is holy. He frees the will from its rebelliousness; he frees the affections from their impurity and earthliness; he sheds abroad in our hearts the love of God and the love of man, restores the whole soul to the image of God, and fills it with the light and purity of heaven. By that same Spirit he bears witness to our adoption into the family of God; gives us an assurance of the divine favour; enables us to draw near to the throne of grace with freedom and confidence; assists us in our prayers; comforts us in times of trouble; leads us in times of doubt; strengthens us for difficult and painful undertakings; supports us in times of temptation, gives us delightful foretastes of eternal blessedness, and fills us with joy unspeakable and full of glory. He is, in short, our all in all.

Thy mighty name salvation is,
  And keeps my happy soul above:
Comfort it brings, and power, and peace,
  And joy, and everlasting love:
To me, with thy dear name are given,
  Pardon, and holiness, and heaven.

Jesus, my all in all thou art;
  My rest in toil, my ease in pain:
The medicine of my broken heart;
  In war my peace; in loss my gain;
My smile beneath the tyrant's frown;
  In shame, my glory and my crown.

In want, my plentiful supply;
  In weakness, my almighty power;
In bonds, my perfect liberty;
  My light in satan's darkest hour;
In grief, my joy unspeakable;
  My life in death, my heaven in hell.

Words cannot speak forth his loveliness; and the soul has not compass sufficient fully to comprehend it. When I contemplate his character, and consider the blessings which he bestows, I am lost in wonder and love. And I feel that he deserves the devoutest affections, and the most unbounded emotions of gratitude, of which my soul is capable. I can adopt the language of the poet again,

" When I survey the wondrous cross,
  On which the Prince of Glory died,
My richest gains I count but lost,
  And pour contempt on all my pride.

Were the whole realm of nature mine,
  That were a present far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
  Demands my soul, my life, my all."

The heart that can look on such glory, and on such perfection of moral beauty and grandeur, as are found in Christ, and that can contemplate such riches of grace and blessing as he has procured for them by his sufferings and death, without being melted into gratitude and love, must be harder than a rock. But many of you whom I am now addressing, *do* love the Saviour. You have studied his character, you have experienced his love, and, in return, you have surrendered to him your hearts. Your desire is to know and to do his will; to present to him some suitable expression of your love. The text tells us what expression it is that he requires: it is to feed his lambs; and to feed his sheep.

The *lambs* are the young converts, especially such as are both young in grace and young in years. The *sheep* are the elder followers of Christ, who have had greater experience in religion. The lambs and the sheep together make up the whole flock. To feed them is to do for them whatever is calculated to promote their welfare, both with respect to the present world and the world to come. Some of the flock may have gone astray; those we must endeavour to bring back, and restore them to their places in the fold. If then we would manifest our love to Christ, we are to endeavour, as far as we have the opportunity and ability, to seek the salvation of souls, and to promote the temporal and the spiritual interests of our fellow Christians.

We are in the first place to feed Christ's lambs. Young converts are in great need of religious instruction, and we must give it to them. We must teach them in our class meetings: we must encourage them to read, and furnish them with useful books; and we must seek to minister to their spiritual improvement by our daily social intercourse with them. We must read and expound to them the sacred scriptures; and those who are called to the work of the ministry, must preach to them the word of life. Every church should have a library and a school connected with it, and the means of useful information should be placed within the reach of every member. We must take care so to live that we may instruct them by our examples. We have it in our power to do an incalculable amount of good or evil to young converts by our examples. The lambs are almost sure to follow the sheep, go which way they may: and it is much the same with the lambs of the flock of Christ. If elder members of the church are remarkable for their gravity and wisdom, their integrity and charity, the younger members of the church also will be likely to be the same. If the elder members of the church are foolish, earthly, covetous, or intemperate, the younger converts are likely to be infected with the same vices, or driven altogether from the flock. It is of the utmost importance, therefore, if we would serve the best interests of the flock of Christ, that we should pay special regard to our own conduct, and set before them as spotless and as perfect an example as possible.

Attention to young converts, and especially to those who are converted in their youth, is of the utmost importance both to the church and to the world. It is from among the youthful converts that we are to look for a supply of pastors and teachers, of missionaries and authors, and of every kind of useful officer in the church. If the young disciples are neglected, the church will degenerate, and the world will sink deeper in darkness and sin : but if we give them the attention which the Redeemer requires, each coming race shall be better than their fathers were ; the church shall become spotless and glorious, and the world shall be speedily converted to God. If you love the Saviour, *feed his lambs.*

And feed his sheep. Instruct them, as you have opportunity, and seek to promote their piety and usefulness in every way you can. Kindly admonish them, if you see them in error ; and comfort them, if you see them in trouble. If they are in want, relieve them ; if they are sick, visit them ; if they are tried and afflicted in spirit, endeavour to minister to their support and consolation.

Every church should see to it that all its members have what is needful to their support and comfort. All that are unable by their own industry to support themselves, should be assisted by their abler brethren. No faithful member should be allowed to want, so long as the church is able to afford relief ; and when a church is *not* able to provide for its poor itself, it should ask help of other churches that *are* able.

And this duty of feeding the flock of Christ is binding on all that profess to be Christ's disciples. It is not binding on ministers only ; but on all that profess love to Christ. All have not the same talents, and all are not required therefore to take upon themselves the same kind or the same amount of labour ; but every one is required to do what he can. The rich must employ their abundance, and the poor must contribute their mites. Pastors must attend to the whole flock, and parents must attend to their families : every one labouring according to the ability which God hath given him.

And to this work we should consecrate our all. Whatever the faithful discharge of this duty may require, we ought to part with it with joy. When Peter went forth to gather and to feed the flock of Christ, he shrunk from no hardships or dangers. He was repeatedly brought before rulers, and repeatedly cast into prison ; but he suffered for his Saviour with joy. And it was the same with Paul : he counted nothing dear unto him, so that he might bring back the wanderers to the fold, and promote the welfare of the flock. And we should imitate their example. The conversion of sinners, and the improvement of the church, should be the one great end of our life. For this we should labour, and for this we should pray, and for this we should be willing to die. We should be industrious in our callings, and we should be temperate in our way of life, that our ability to serve the flock of Christ, and promote the salvation of the world may be increased. And nothing should make us weary. Reproaches and persecutions should rather rouse us to greater diligence. We should not only be steadfast and unmoveable, but *always abounding* in the work of the Lord.

Unless we thus seek the salvation of souls, and promote the interests of Christ's flock, our professions of love to Christ will be all in vain. *He* laid down his *life* for his sheep, and it is impossible he should love *us*, unless we regard them with a similar affection. What is done to his flock, he takes as done to himself. If we should neglect the least lamb in his flock, he would take it as a slight upon himself : while the least act of kindness we can do, if it be only the giving of a cup of cold water to one of his disciples, shall not lose its reward. And if you are faithful to death, then, when Christ the Great Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away. Amen.

The preceding discourse, lately preached in Newcastle and Gateshead by one of the Editors of this periodical, may serve as an answer to those who ask, What are the sentiments of the Editors with respect to the Divinity of Christ, and the Doctrine of the Atonement ?

CHAPEL DEBTS.

I consider debts on places of worship to be great evils, especially when they are very heavy, and I think that efforts should be made by Christian churches to pay them all off as soon as possible.

1. It is generally considered to be the duty of Christians as individuals to keep out of debt, as far as practicable; and if it be their duty as individuals, I cannot see why it should not be their duty as churches too.

2. Chapel debts are frequently the cause of unpleasantness amongst the trustees. When there is a scarcity of funds, the trustees begin to quarrel with each other. One is afraid that the rest have not done their duty in looking after the chapel interests, and another thinks that his brethren have not been sufficiently liberal in their own subscriptions. The consciousness of a deficiency has of itself an unhappy influence upon the minds of the trustees, and without any intention, and perhaps unknown to themselves, they speak in such a way as is calculated to give each other pain, and to lead to misunderstandings and strife. And when men are at variance among themselves, it is impossible for them to do much for the prosperity of religion.

3. Heavy chapel debts oblige the trustees to have frequent recourse to the people for supplies of funds, and when those applications to the people become so frequent, they tend to discourage them, and to cause them either to leave the chapel, or to go on their way with heaviness.

4. The longer debts on chapels are allowed to remain, the more difficult it becomes generally to pay them off. It is not always *easy* for a man to pay his *own* debts, but it is still harder to pay debts contracted by others. And when debts are allowed to remain on chapels for ten, or twenty, or thirty years, it generally happens that the persons who contracted them die off in that time, and leave the burdens to others. Thus persons become responsible for debts on places which they had no hand in building: for places which, if they had had them to build, they would have built, as they think perhaps, on a better principle, or in a better situation. And it is not comfortable to have to pay money for what they may consider other peoples' mistakes.

5. Again, heavy chapel debts tend to injure congregations. People do not like to go to chapels that are understood to be heavily burdened. They may be liberal, but they may not think it the best way to spend their money, in giving it to pay off old debts on chapels. They had rather contribute their money towards doing something new, than towards paying for something that was done so long ago. And the idea of a heavy debt on a chapel, would be enough to keep *some* people from attending it, even if they were sure they would never be called upon to take any part in paying it. A heavy debt is not a pleasant thing to think about. I should not myself feel so comfortable in a place of worship heavily burdened with debt, as I should feel in a place that was free, or burdened but lightly. I had rather, if it were possible, worship in a place that owed no man anything.

6. To have heavy debts on chapels must be very painful to the minds of the trustees. I have known trustees who have been almost ruined both in body and soul, by the unhappy situation in which they have been placed by their responsibilities for chapel debts. These things ought not to be allowed. We ought to make the situation of every officer of the church as easy and as pleasant as possible. If *we* were trustees, we should not like to be left under crushing burdens; and we ought not quietly to leave others under them.

7. Again, the greater the burden on a chapel, the more difficult it is to get people to bear it. Many will take upon themselves a *little* burden, that would shrink from a *greater* one. Men like to give their help, where they are sure it will afford effectual relief. They do not like to bestow their money where it is doubtful whether it will effectually meet the case or not. A little debt is paid off at once, and people contribute towards it with pleasure. But a big debt swallows sum after sum, and seems to grow no less, till the contributors are quite disheartenB

ed, and give up the attempt in despair. If I wanted to obtain help in any undertaking, I would take care so to contrive as not to *need* over much help. If I were in need of but little help, I should almost be sure to obtain it; but if I needed *much*, I should expect to receive little or none at all. And the way to obtain help for chapels, is not to be able to make out a sad deplorable case, but to be able to show that you are doing tolerably well already, and that a little additional assistance will set you completely straight.

8. Heavy chapel debts have a bad influence in another way: they tend to keep the attention of the leading friends fixed upon one single dark point, instead of leaving them free to look abroad, to contemplate the state of the world, and to find out new ways, and form and execute new plans, of usefulness. Every church should aim at the illumination and conversion of the whole world, and should look out for opportunities of contributing towards the accomplishment of that noble work. But when they are burdened with a heavy debt, they are unable to look abroad; they dare not entertain the thought of any new extended plan of usefulness; they are afraid that if they should give any considerable portion of their time, or attention, or money to other benevolent projects, the affairs of their chapel would suffer thereby. Thus are they hampered and fettered. They feel the stirrings of benevolence within them: they hear the calls that are made on them by a perishing world; but their attention and their energies are all kept down by their own oppressive responsibilities. Perhaps they see it desirable to have a tract society, a library, a home mission, an institution for publishing cheap pamphlets and books, a fund for the relief of their poor members; but whenever any of these objects present themselves to their minds, their good desires are at once met and nipped in the bud, by the thought of their burdensome chapel debt. The friends are, in this way, shut out from the greatest enjoyment of life, the pleasure of planning and carrying out enterprizes of benevolence.

9. Heavy debts on places of worship, frequently lead the followers of Christ to seek help from ungodly persons, and make themselves dependent on them for support. The heavy weight pressing upon them, makes pew-rents necessary, and pews are of course let to any who will pay for them. Subscriptions are wanted to make up deficiencies, and applications for subscriptions are made to persons that have no respect for religion, nor any settled regard to the welfare of mankind. Wealthy people are needed as trustees, and as pious people of wealth are very scarce, they are driven to request persons to become trustees who are not pious. And when Christian churches allow themselves to be dependent upon worldly people for supplies of funds, it is next to impossible for them to avoid being more or less turned aside thereby from the strict straightforward way of duty. The preachers also, when they perceive that the prosperity of their chapel funds depends in a great measure upon the favour of unconverted persons, are in very great danger of being influenced thereby in their ministrations. A preacher would hardly like to offend a seat-holder, or to provoke the wrath of a trustee. It is a painful thing to deal faithfully with ungodly persons, when we have accepted a favour from them. People take pews who are drunkards, and how is the preacher to declare the whole truth, and speak out plainly on the subject of drunkenness, without risking the drunkard's pew-rents? Persons take pews who have once or twice been made bankrupts, or who have four or five times compounded with their creditors; and how can the preacher speak out the whole truth plainly on the subject of honesty and equity, without risking the support of those individuals? Other pew-holders are engaged in dishonest traffic, pursuing businesses which are injurious to the health and morals of the community; and how shall the preacher speak out plainly and fully on the obligations of universal charity, without risking the support of *those* individuals? I know that preachers of the Gospel *ought* not to be influenced by a regard to the favour of men, but I know also, that we have no right to expect ministers generally to preach under such circumstauces as we have been

describing, without being influenced. Besides, the minister is not only in danger of driving away seat-holders if he preach faithfully; but he is in danger of provoking the trustees as well. The preacher may have confidence in God, and so resolve to declare the whole truth without reserve. *He* may be governed by no consideration but a regard to the glory of God, and the welfare of men's souls. He, therefore, is prepared to inculcate the temperance, the equity, and the charity of the Gospel, in all their strictness and fulness; and he proceeds accordingly. But the drunken, the dishonest, and the selfish seat-holders are dreadfully annoyed, and begin to complain to the trustees, and threaten, if the preacher is to insult them personally, they will throw up their seats, and leave the chapel. What shall the preacher do now? Here is a double calamity: his hearers are offended, and the trustees intimate to him, that unless he be more guarded in his remarks, the interests of the chapel will be ruined, and they themselves be sent to jail. It is next to impossible, if not impossible altogether, for preachers, thus circumstanced, to avoid being led either to soften the messages which they are sent by God to deliver, or to give up their situations altogether.

I have not the slightest doubt but that the circumstances in which many preachers are placed, in consequence of heavy chapel debts, have this unhappy influence upon their labours. I have not the slightest doubt but that numbers of ministers, at this present time, see evils in their congregations which they dare not oppose, for fear of throwing the affairs of their chapels into disorder. A preacher lately contended, in conversation with a brother of mine, that as things are now, it would do harm to declare the whole truth: and I doubt not but numbers believe it to be so, and act accordingly. Preaching generally, at the present day, is nothing like the preaching of Jesus Christ and the Apostles. That which passes for evangelical preaching in our days, is no more like the Gospel, than moonshine and mists are like the full unclouded light of day. The practical parts of the Gospel are almost entirely laid aside; and the principal materials of what are called evangelical sermons, are little else than cold and barren speculations or sickly sentimentalities. Sinners may listen to an hundred such sermons, and never be molested, and never know that the minister had any reference to such as him. Earthliness, covetousness, sensuality, vanity, pride, love of power, anger, revenge, and all uncharitableness may flourish under such preaching, as weeds under sunshine and showers. I have not, to my recollection, met with an intelligent person for some years, who has not complained of the barrenness and inefficiency of the common kind of preaching. And the evil may be attributed, in a great measure, I have no doubt, to those unholy alliances which churches and ministers have been led to make with worldly persons, in order to obtain support for their funds. Nor do I see how a better kind of preaching,—a kind of preaching resembling the preaching of Christ and his Apostles,—can possibly be had, until either the preachers themselves turn out into the markets and streets to preach, or the people provide them with chapels that are not dependent for their support on worldly and ungodly men.

Some are afraid that if chapels were in easy circumstances, the parties connected with them would become easy, and they therefore plead for debts as a stimulus to exertion. To this I answer, 1. They are no true Christians, that could be easy in a world like this. They who could fold their arms in sloth, while so great a portion of the human race are living without God and without hope, must know very little of the religion of Christ, or have very little of Christ's spirit. They must have sat under a strange kind of preaching, or have been exceedingly slow to understand and obey the truth. Men properly instructed in the religion of Christ, and truly converted to God, can no more be easy or self-indulgent in a world like this, than they could lie down to sleep in the fire. And if the leading men in Christian churches know no more of the religion of Christ, and feel no more of its influence, than to be able to live at ease while a perishing world is pleading for their help, it is time they were better taught. Let an improved system of religious instruction be adopted, and the discharge of chapel debts, so far from making the societies or the leading friends easy and inactive, will set them to work with new vigour for the conversion and salvation of the world.

It will be asked, Is it possible to pay off all chapel debts? In my opinion, it *is* possible. In some casés it has been done, and that by societies which were composed of none but poor members. I was lately at the anniversary meeting of a chapel, which had been raised and paid for, with the exception of a very few pounds, in the course of about four or five years: and there was not a rich person in the whole society, not one above the rank of labouring men. Two pious active women, one of which had a large family of children to look to, had been the principal instruments in accomplishing the great work. I see no reason why the same diligence and perseverance should not be able to accomplish as much in other cases.

There is a society of Christians that does without chapel debts, generally speaking, and which has done without them, I believe, for several generations. At present they are a wealthy people, and it is very few chapels that they build; but when they were a poor and greatly persecuted people, and when they built as many places of worship perhaps, according to their number, as other denominations have built, they acted, if I am not mistaken, on the same principle. And if other Christian churches would resolutely set to work, and make a fair and vigorous effort, there is not one of them but might succeed, in a few years, in paying off every farthing they owe.

Suppose the members of Christian societies were to give up the use of all luxuries, and to appropriate the money saved by so doing to the payment of chapel debts; where would their debts be in the course of three years? There would not be a debt remaining. If they were to appropriate to this object no more than the money spent on two or three common luxuries, the work would be accomplished in three years. But if the members of religious societies were to do their *best*, they might pay off their debts in less than a single year, and then go forth unencumbered and untramelled to scatter the light and blessings of salvation through the whole world. These are our views, and we submit them to the consideration of our readers, in hopes that the subject will be thoroughly investigated, and that the result will be advantageous to the church.

THE QUARRELS OF CHRISTIANS.

No. 1.

"THE *quarrels of Christians!* And do Christians quarrel?"-Such, we may presume, would be the exclamation of one who, having correct and Scriptural views as to what a Christian should be, had never been pained by witnessing what many called Christians are. But alas! Quarrels, even among those who are termed by way of distinction "professing Christians," are by no means unfrequent. We wish to speak with unusual plainness on this head. Our friends must bear with us. They must not think that we are become their enemies because we tell them the truth. If we make them sorry we feel not pleasure, but pain in so doing. We wish only that both ourselves and they may be made sorry after a godly sort. Will they bear with us? Will they suffer us thus far? Will they remember that which is written, "*faithful are the wounds of a friend.*" And will they say, with the man after God's own heart, "Let the righteous smite me; and it shall be a kindness: and let him reprove me; it shall be an excellent oil, which shall not break my head."

Brethren, "there is utterly a fault among us," because we *quarrel* one with another, and with those who are not of us. It must be, indeed, that *offences* will come, but notwithstanding this, if it be possible, and as far as in us lieth, *we* must live *peaceably with all men.*

Now thus to live, implies, first, that we do not offend, and secondly, that we do not revenge, but calmly and patiently endure the offences of others. "If it be possible, and as much as in us lieth," such must be our lives. But *is it possible* thus to live? We answer, in one sense it is possible, but in another it is not. It is possible, to the true Christian, to live in a state of perfect freedom from evil motives, dispositions, or tempers; in this sense we need not offend against any. But, in another sense, the best of Christians are unable always to avoid offending. In respect to the operations of our intellectual powers, let us become as holy as we may, we shall ever have to confess that "in many things we offend all." Our apprehension, our judgment, and our reason, are all imperfect, and must remain so to the end of life. "Here, we know but in part." Thus, in spite of all possible caution, we may believe a brother to be guilty of a crime, when he is innocent. We may decide that a certain action is a crime, which is strictly virtuous. Even, from correct premises, we may ignorantly draw the most erroneous conclusions. Now, since in our intercourse with those around us, we may err in any of those respects, we are in danger of censuring where we should commend, and of commending where we should censure. These, strictly speaking, are *offences*, and from *such* offences we have no promise of deliverance. Still, however, *as far as in us lieth*, we must avoid even these.

And, as to *taking offence*, or being offended, a somewhat similar answer may be given. Let others do as they will or may towards us, it is possible calmly to endure the whole, and in perfect patience to possess our souls. Yet this by no means implies that we become entirely *passive* in such cases. We may, quite consistently with such calm endurance, and perfect patience, seek to have our grievances redressed. For, though we should passively suffer wrong, *rather* than use improper means of redress, yet there is a method, which every Christian may, and even ought, to adopt. It is a method of divine appointment and of universal obligation, and is as follows. (We entreat for this a serious and careful consideration: for we must declare that in our age it is shamefully and fearfully neglected.)

"*If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone; if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it to the church* (the congregation of brethren); *but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee, as an heathen man and a publican. Verily I say unto you, whatsoever ye* (the congregation) *shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven.*" *Matt.* xviii. 15, 18.

Nothing can be more explicit and intelligible, and no command whatever is more solemnly obligatory on all, than this direction.

1st. "If our brother trespass against us," we are *commanded* to go and tell him of his fault in private. This is to be our *first* mention of the trespass. If we find that we have no such proof that he has trespassed, as enables us to bring the matter before the party himself, we may by no means make a charge against him at all: we may not mention to others, what we dare not mention "between him and us alone." And, even where the fault is manifest and undeniable, still the offending party must first be told of it in private. Such is the first step that a Christian must take towards the settlement of a dispute or offence. How just and reasonable is such a course! "*If he then shall hear us, we have gained our brother.*" And it is more than probable that he will hear us. How few could refuse so to do, were such a mode pursued towards them: when they found that not a breath of complaint against them, had reached the ear of another, when they alone are told in what they have offended, on what grounds the charge is made, and when all this is manifestly done in love. If then he *hear us:* if he allow the reproof, and either fairly clear himself of blame, or frankly acknowledge himself guilty of the fault, we have *gained* our brother: we have won him over from his error, and we have only one thing more to do; "If he repent, *forgive him.*" Such is the first Christian step towards an offending brother. As we have already said, so now we say again, he who feels that he has no such evidence against a brother as would bear him out in adopting *this* mode of reproof, nay, he who is from any cause unwilling to adopt this method, must either entirely hold his peace as to the affair, or himself become guilty of offence, and that not only against the party who either has, or is supposed to have, offended, but against the *church*, and against the divine Head of the Church.

But, still, some cases may require further measures. This may be necessary, to secure not only Christian redress for the party offending against, but the welfare of the community also, and even the salvation of the offender. Now the second step also is clearly described. "But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more." Christian! do *you hear* your master? Is he speaking idle words? or is he speaking laws? Laws, not one jot or tittle of which may be dispensed with, on any excuse whatever. Now if any regard is had to the teaching and authority of Christ, a Christian's path in this respect is positive and plain. This and this only, after reproving a brother in private, may he next do,—take with him one or two more. He may not say, "I've done enough already, I'll now expose such base conduct to the church, or to the world." Nor may he say with many in our day, "I'll trouble myself, and destroy my *peace of mind*, no longer. No, no! I may *forgive*, but I cannot *forget* his treatment of me." Alas, for the man that settles down in such a temper! Christian he is not! Poor deluded creature! He knows not what spirit he is of. To talk of "peace of mind," whilst settling down purposely into enduring, *rankling* recollection of an offence, which, had he brought it before his offending brother in the way that Christ enjoins, would very probably have been acknowledged in penitence and godly sorrow, is infatuation which leads to death.

And how reasonable is this second step also. How admirably calculated to restrain improper tempers and words on each side. How likely, by the aid of a third and fourth party, to place the dispute in a true light and position, to *establish* the guilt or innocence of the accused brother. Do this therefore, "that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established."

But alas! It appears even this will not always be sufficient to produce conviction. "The heart" is *surely* "deceitful above all things." A third step it appears will sometimes be necessary, and another appeal is therefore specified, "and if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church." If the two witnesses after a fair and mutual discussion of the matter, believing your complaint well grounded, shall require him to acknowledge his fault, and he refuse to hear *them* also, then and *not until then*, make it public among the brethren. And do not this privately, and without his knowledge. Do not tell it, when and where he has no chance of defending himself. Do not, whilst pretending an unwillingness to expose him publicly, stab his entire reputation privately. By no means tell it in any way, unless to benefit him by that mention of it. Choose that time, and place, and mode, which, even after all you have done hitherto has failed, may, and is much calculated to be, successful. "Tell it to the *church*. Not to the world, which will but triumph over both of you. But tell it to the "*general assembly* and church," of brethren, with whom you meet "together," —"in one place," and with whom both you and your offending brother should be of one heart and one soul. Tell it to *them* collectively, and when assembled together, and their decision shall be final.

This then, as we have said before, is THE LAW, in cases of dispute, or trespass among Christians. A Christian, (and the obligation to be Christians is universal: it extends to every one of us) may no more set aside this law, than all the laws of Christ. And he has no more right to use any other mode, so far as himself only is concerned, than he has to take the civil law out of the hands of judge and jury, and put a murderer to death with his own hands. He may, indeed, in cases of which the civil law takes cognizance, allow the powers that be, to exercise that authority which God hath ordained as a terror to evil-doers, and a praise to them that do well. (These we need not discuss here.) But in all other cases the way is plain, and the direction explicit. And until all these divinely enjoined proceedings be employed, the offending brother must be treated as a Christian brother: as a member of the church. But when all these have been resorted to, that obligation ceases. "But if he shall neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man, and a publican." Regard him no longer as a *Christian* brother; not as a saint, but as a sinner. Till then regard him as, perhaps, an involuntary offender, but then at last, as he really must be, an obstinate and determined transgressor; as one who sets at nought an ordinance of Christ, which demands of him submission.

And now, let us hear our master's concluding words. It is the Lord of heaven and earth that speaks. It is He, to whom "judgment is committed." Let us listen, and oh! let his words penetrate our souls, and for ever banish thence all murmuring at his directions,, or unwillingness to carry them out into practice, "Verily,"—mark the emphatic commencement of the sentence, "verily, I say unto you, whatever ye, *(the congregation,)* shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven." Such regard shall be paid, even in heaven, to these decisions of an assembly of sincere Christians. Whatsoever they shall determine as to the character of such an offence, shall be binding on the offender: he shall be required to submit to the sentence of his Christian brethren. Thus shall peace be effected, or the rebellious member shall be expelled the church, and he shall be held "an heathen man and a publican" by God, as well as by the church.

From what has now been advanced respecting the dispositions, and the conduct proper for a Christian in cases of offence, we shall be enabled to see with greater clearness and accuracy the evils existing around us in this respect. In this gospel-mirror we shall be enabled to ascertain how far we are, or are not, involved in the guilt of quarrelling. All that is inconsistent with such a disposition, and every word or action that is contrary to such conduct as is enjoined upon us, is manifestly sinful. We are guiltless only whilst we abide by the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. "It must be that offences will come, but woe unto that man by whom they come." And woe to him by whom they are *increased!* Woe to him that does not behave to the offender as Christ directs! And yet, who regards these solemn injunctions? Who, in the first instance, as much as in him lieth, and through Christ strengthening him, gives no offence: no real ground of offence? Where is the man that thus lives peaceably with all men? And, who calmly and patiently endures unkind and unjust treatment? Who returns not evil for evil, but contrarywise blessing? And especially, where is the faithful observer of his Lord's direction in cases of trespass?—who first mentions the affair to the offending party alone, then to him in the presence of one or two more, and then unto the church? Brethren! said we not truly, "There is utterly a fault among us." And how fearful are the consequences of our disobedience. The *quarrels of Christians* are a disgrace to the church, and a stumbling-block to the world. They are an obstacle which, were there no other, would perpetuate the sin and unbelief of those that know not God. And how should the world, as yet, know God? "That they all may be one even as we are one, *that the world may know that thou hast sent me.*" Such was the prayer of our Lord and Master; and such should be the state of his visible church. But alas, it is not!

Brethren, if we would turn these considerations to practical account, we must not leave the matter here. No; we must apply these general principles, and more specific directions, to ourselves. In how many cases have not *we* offended! How often have we offended consciously! And, especially, how often have we offended carelessly! How very rarely have we, "as far as in us laid," avoided the appearance of evil. And, when a brother has trespassed against us, has not our conduct very frequently, nay almost constantly, been the contrary of our duty. When, of all the occasions in which we have imagined ourselves aggrieved, have *we* held our peace, until we spoke to the supposed offender in private?

When, after this was done, have *we* taken with us one or two more! And when *we*, after taking these two steps in order to move him to repentance, either told the thing to the church, or for ever after held our peace, and allowed all feeling of the offence to pass away from our minds?

Brethren, what do our heads and hearts say to these questions? What to the past, and what as to the future? Should not the time past more than suffice? Shall we for ever act as other men, and violate our master's precepts still?

But here, the carnal mind is roused, and here the "old man" is heard to murmur. Nay, here the devil also offers his opinion. A host of *excuses* here present themselves,—anything, any delusion, sooner than obedience,—which, and which only, is "*unto life.*"

We must examine these excuses. But we will allow some interval,—the "old man" shall shape and arrange his "strong arguments," and we will give them, and an examination of them, in an early number.

THE INFLUENCE WHICH CHRISTIAN FAITH SHOULD HAVE UPON US IN REFERENCE TO SUFFERINGS.

From Baxter's Life of Faith.

Suffer as Believers.—Fear not the wrath of man, but "endure as seeing him that is invisible." Heb. xi. 27. Show plainly, that you seek a *better country*, verse 14—16. Read often, Heb. xi. and xii. chapters. Behold the Kingdom prepared and secured for you by Christ, and then you will be indifferent which way the wind of human favour, or applause, shall sit; or what kind of weather the Lunar influences and aspects shall produce. Such a faith will make you, with Abraham, to turn your back on all, and engage in pilgrimage for an inheritance after to be received; though he knew not whither he went. Heb. xi. 8. As strangers and travellers, you will not be troubled to leave towns and fields, buildings and wealth, and walks behind you, as knowing that you were but to pass by them, desiring and seeking a "better country, that is, an heavenly." And you shall lose nothing by this passing by all in the world. For God will not be ashamed to be called your God; and he hath prepared for you a city. Heb. xi. 13—16. Seriously respect the recompense of reward, and it will make you choose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season: esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of the world. v. 25—26. Stephen's *sight* would cause Stephen's *patience*. Hold on as Christians; the end is near. "Let us run with patience the race that is set before us; looking to Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God: consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds." Heb. xii. 2—3.

You may well endure the buffettings and scorn, if you foresee the honour. You may well endure the crown of thorns, if you foresee the crown of glory. You may endure to be forsaken of all, if you see him that will never fail you, nor forsake you. This foretaste of the rivers of pleasure with the Lord, will drown the taste of the vinegar and gall. Whine not like worldlings that have lost their portion, when you are stript as bare as Job. If you are true believers, you have *all* still, for God is all: you have lost *nothing*; for faith hath made the world as *nothing* to you: and will you whine and vex yourself for *nothing?* Can you call it nothing so frequently, and easily, in your prayers, and ordinary speech; and do you now recall this, or tell us by your serious grief, that you speak but in hypocrisy and jest. "No one is destroyed by the troubles of adversity who has not allowed himself to be captivated by the pleasures of prosperity," saith Augustine. Had there been less *idolatrous love*, there would have been less *tormenting grief and care.* Our life consisteth not in the abundance of the things that we possess. He is not happy that *hath* them, but he that neither *needeth* nor *desireth* them. Superfluity doth but burden and break down. The corn that is too rank lodgeth, and the branches break that are overladen with fruit. It is *pleasure,* and not *pain,* that is the world's most deadly sting. It hath never so much *hurt* us, as when it hath flattered us into *delights* or *hopes. Hope* is the bait; prosperity and pleasure the net that souls are ordinarily ensnared by. Men lose not their souls for poverty, but for riches; nor for dishonour, but for honour; nor for sorrow, but for delight.

The luxuriances of prosperity bring us so frequently under the pruning hook. The surfeits and summer fruits of fulness and carnal contentments and delights, do put us to the trouble of our sicknesses and our physic. "How hardly shall rich men enter into heaven," saith he that well knew who should enter. "It is difficult," saith Augustine, "nay impossible, that one should enjoy the good things both of the present and of the future world; that *here* he should pamper his flesh, and *there* delight his spirit; that he should pass from earthly delights below, to heavenly delights above; that he should be always first, and be glorious both in earth and in heaven." The hope is, that with God such human impossibilities are possible. But it is more terrible than desirable to be put upon so great a difficulty. Sweet dishes will have wasps and flies, but most of them are drowned in their delights. A full meal seems the best in the eating; but a light meal is better the next day. More thank God in heaven for adversity than for prosperity. And more in hell cry out of the fruit of prosperity, than of adversity. Many never look towards heaven till affliction cast them on their backs, so that they can look no other way. "It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy statutes," saith David, Psalm cxix. 71. "Before I was afflicted I went astray." v. 67. "In very faithfulness thou hast afflicted me." v. 78. One sight of heaven by faith will force you to "reckon that the sufferings of the present time are unworthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." Rom. viii. 18. To suffer for Christ and righteousness' sake, is but to turn an unavoidable, fruitless pain, into that which, being voluntary, is the more easy, and hath a great reward in heaven. Matt. v. 11, 12. And to part with that for a *crown of life,* which else we must part with for *nothing.* Worldly friends, and wealth, and honour, are summer fruits that will quickly fall. Hungry fowls know where it is harvest, but as soon as it thunders they fly. Those that must dwell with you in heaven are your sure and steadfast friends. Those that are now highest, and least acquainted with the tongue of malice, the unfaithfulness of friends, or rage of enemies, shall shortly say, [Atque hæc exemplis, &c.—] "The calamities which we once contemplated as the lot of our ancestors, are now become our own." There is but the difference of an *est,* and an *erit,* an *is,* and a *will be,* between their mirth and endless sorrows: their honour, and their endless shame: nor between our sorrow and our endless joy. Their final honour is to be *embalmed,* and their dust to be covered with a sumptuous monument, and their names extolled by the mouths of men that little know how poor a comfort all this is to the miserable soul. In the height of their honour you may foresee the surgeon opening their bowels, and showing the receptacles of the treasure of the epicure, and what remains of the price that he received for his betrayed soul. He cuts out the heart with a "*Hæ sedes livoris,*" *&c.* "This was the seat of envy; now it is the food of worms." You next tread on his interred corpse, that's honoured but with a *Hic jacet (here lieth the body of such a one).* And if he have the honour to be magnified by fame or history, it is a fool's trap to ensnare the living, but easeth not the soul in hell. And shall we envy men such a happiness as this? What if they be able to command men's lives, and to hurt those that they hate for a little while? Is this a matter of honour or of delight? A pestilence is more honourable, if destroying be an honour. The devil is more powerful (if God permit him) to do men hurt, than the greatest tyrant in the world. And yet I hope you envy not his happiness, nor are ambitious to partake of his honours.

Let the *world* then *rejoice* while we *lament* and weep: our *sorrow shall be speedily turned into joy: and our joy shall no man take from us.* Job xvi. 20—22. Envy not a dying man the happiness of a feather bed or a merry dream. You think it hard *in them* to deny *you* the liberties and comforts of this life, though *you* look for *heaven:* and will you be more *cruel* than the *ungodly?* Will you envy the trifling commodities or delights of earth, to those that are like to have no more, but to lie in hell when the sport is ended? It is unreasonable impatience that cannot endure to see them in silks and gallantry a few days, that must be so extremely miserable for ever. Your crumbs, and leavings, and overplus, is their all. And will you grudge them *this much?* In this you are unlike your heavenly Father, that doeth good to the just and to the unjust: would you change cases with them? Would you change the *fruit of your adversity* for the *fruit of their prosperity.*

Affliction maketh you somewhat more calm, and wise, and sober, and cautious, and considerate, and preventeth, as well as cureth, sin. Prosperity makes them (through their abuse,) inconsiderate, rash, insensible, foolish, proud, unpersuadable. *And the turning away of the simple slayeth them, and the prosperity of fools destroyeth them.* Prov. i. 32. It is long since *Lazarus's* sores were healed, and his wants relieved: and long since *Dives' feast* was ended. O let me rather be afflicted than rejected; and be a door-keeper in the house of God, than dwell in the tents of wickedness: and rather be under the rod, than turned out of doors. Look with a serious faith upon eternity, and then make a great matter of enjoyments or sufferings here if you can. Great joys and sorrows forbid men to complain of the biting of a flea. Thunder claps drown a whispering voice.

O what unbelief our impatience and disquietness in sufferings do discover! Is this living by faith? and conversing in another world? and taking God for all, and the world for nothing? What! make such a do of poverty, imprisonment, injuries, disgraces, with heaven and hell before our eyes? *The Lord vouchsafe me that condition, in which I shall be nearest to himself, and have most communion with heaven; be it what it will be for the things of earth.* These are the desires to which I will stand.

To *thank* God for the fruit of *past* afflictions, as the most necessary mercies of our lives, as some of us have daily cause, and at the same time to be impatient under *present* afflictions, or inordinately *afraid of those to come,* is an irrational as well as an unbelieving incongruity.

Are we derided, slandered, abused by the ungodly? If we repine that we have enemies and must fight; we repine that we are Christ's soldiers, and that is, in fact, to repine that we are Christians. *How can a general prove the courage of his soldiers without an enemy,* saith Lactantius. The enemies of God do not *use* to fight *professedly against himself,* but against his *soldiers.* If the remnants of goodness had not been a derision among the Heathens themselves, in the more sober sort, a Heathen would not have said, [*Nondum felix es, &c.*] *i. e.* Thou are not yet happy if the multitude deride thee not: if thou wilt be blessed, learn first to contemn the opinion of the multitude, and to be contemned by them. Nobody will deride or persecute us in Heaven.

A LETTER OF ST. CYPRIAN.

Written about 1600 *years ago, i. e. the year A.D.* 240.

[The church, in Cyprian's time, was, according to his account, in a fallen and deplorable state. Yet we may learn much of practical genuine Christianity, from such letters as the following. We hope to exhibit to our readers, from time to time, a variety of similar details of the *working* of our holy religion, in the primitive ages. *We must return to "the first works."* EDS.]

TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.—"This Epistle was written to one Euchratius, a brother, (but whether bishop, presbyter, or laick, doth not certainly appear,) upon occasion of a player converted to the Christian religion, and leaving off the stage, but, yet continuing to train up others for it, and to instruct them in that naughty practice. The question hence arising was, whether such a person was to be continued in the communion of the church, who exercised a calling attended at that time with very untoward circumstances. Hence it should seem that Euchratius was in some degree of the clergy; such a question coming more properly from one in that order, than from another person."

Cyprian, to his brother Euchratius, sendeth greeting:

You have been pleased, my dear brother, agreeably to that mutual affection and regard which we bear each other, to consult me upon the case of a certain player who is settled amongst you, and still perseveres in his scandalous profession, of ruining rather than instructing youths, and of communicating to others that pernicious skill, which he hath, himself, unhappily acquired; and you asked my opinion, whether such a person should be admitted to the communion of the church? My answer is, that I conceive it dishonourable to the majesty of God, and a reflection upon the discipline of his holy religion, that the sanctity of his church should be profaned, and her character blemished by suffering the infection of so foul a guilt to come near her. For since we find men forbidden in the Mosaic law to *put on a woman's garment*, and whoever doth so is pronounced *an abomination unto the Lord his God;* how much greater, in all reason, must the crime of those be judged, who not only *put on women's garments*, but whose business, moreover, it is, to teach the imitation of all their effeminate gestures, and finical airs, and motions?

It is a very trifling excuse which is made in this case, to say, that truly the party *himself* hath left off acting, when yet he teaches *others* that pernicious art. For indeed he can, in no reasonable account, be said to have left off, who acts by *others* under him, and who, instead of performing in his own single person, breeds up a number to carry on the same trade after him; instructing people how to break in upon the appointments of God, by melting down a man into a woman, and by an unnatural change of sexes, making court to the devil, who delights in marring the workmanship of heaven, and in enervating the strength of it, by practices too lewd to be decently mentioned. If a man will here pretend, that necessity and want drive him to this resort, he may enter himself upon the list of those who are maintained by the treasury of the church, and thence may find a proper relief; I mean, if he will bring himself to be content with a more *spare*, though an *wholesome* diet, and not expect to be bought off from sin, by a large pension, when it is *his own*, and not *our* interest, which is thereby consulted. But if his desires cannot be satisfied without being answered in their highest demands, he must look out for *such* an answer to them, amongst the pernicious gains of those who steal men away from the banquet of *Abraham, Isaac*, and *Jacob*, in the *kingdom of heaven*, and *so fatten* them *here*, as to leave them *hereafter* in a perpetual state of *leanness* and destitution. Wherefore your business will be, to use your utmost endeavours in reclaiming this man from his scandalous trade and practice, in gaining him over to a more innocent way of living, by a prospect of supplying his necessities, and in persuading him to be content with the allowance of the church; which, if it be less plentiful, is, however, more for his advantage.

But if the stock of your church be low, and cannot afford him maintenance, you may easily send him hither, and here he may be accommodated with food and raiment; where, instead of teaching others the practices which will prove destructive, he may learn for himself what will be conducive to his own salvation. And thus, my dear son, I take my leave, and bid you heartily farewell.

HOW FAITH WOULD TEACH US TO VALUE AND EMPLOY OUR TIME.

(From Baxter's Life of Faith.)

Employ your time as becomes believers. Faith only can acquaint you what an inconceivable weight doth lie upon this inch of hasty time. As you behave yourselves for a few days, it must go with you in joy or misery for ever! You have your appointed time, for your appointed work. God hath turned the glass upon you; much of it is run out already. No price can call back one hour that you have lost. No power or policy can retard its course. When it comes to the last sand, and time is gone, you will know the worth of it. You will then confess it should have seemed more precious in your eyes, than to have been cast away upon things of nought. O precious time! more worth than all the riches of the world! How highly is it valued by all at *last?* And how basely is it esteemed *now* by the most. Now it is no more with them, than to be sold for unnecessary sports, and ease, and wasted in idleness and vain delights: but *then*, when it is gone, and all's too late, how loud would they cry, if cries could call *back time again!* O then what a mercy would it seem, if God would try them once again! and trust them with another life, or with *Hezekiah's* fifteen years! or but with fifteen days, or hours, upon such terms of grace, as they held that life they abused. It amazeth me to observe the lamentable stupidity of the world, how hard they beg for time when they think it is near an end! and how carelessly they let it slide away, when they have strength and faculties to improve it! They are grievously afraid lest death deprive them of it; and yet they are not afraid to deprive themselves of the use and fruit of it, and to cast it away as contemptuously as if it were a useless thing. I seldom come near a dying man, but I hear him complain of the loss of *time*, and wish it were to spend again, that it might be better valued and used. And yet the *living* will not be warned. O value *time*, as wise men, while you have it; and not as miserable fools, when it is gone! If our Lord said, "I must do the work of him that sent me while it is day; for the night cometh when no man can work"—John ix. 4; what need then have such as we to be doing, and make much of time? O let not company, mirth, or business, make you forget the work of *time!* Can you play, or loiter away your hours, with eternity in your eye? Get the sun to stand still, and time to make a truce with you, before you lose another hour.

O what heads, what hearts, have all those men, that, standing against the verge of an endless world, can think they have any time to spare! Hath God given you too much? If not, why do you lose it? If he hath, why are you loth that he should shorten it? You would not throw away your gold, as contemptuously as you do your time; whereas an hour's time is more valuable than gold. Frown on that company that would rob you of half an hour's time. Tell them you have something else to do than to feast, or play, or talk away your time unnecessarily. O tell them you were not made for nothing. You are in a race, and must not stand still: you are in a fight, and must not cease: your work is great; much of it is undone: your enemies are not idle: death will not stop: the judge is coming, and still beholds you: and heaven or hell are ready to receive our ending life, and tell us how we spent our time: and can you find time to spare? You are not made as weather-cocks, to stand up on high for men to look at, and by turning about with every wind, to show them which way it standeth. Turn not your lives into that curse, Levit. xxvi. 20. *(You shall spend your strength in vain.)* Believe it, time must be reviewed. The day is near when every man of you had rather find it in your accounts, (so many hours spent in self-examination and holy meditation; so many in reading the word of God; so many in fervent prayer; and so many in doing good to others) than (so many spent in needless sports and pleasures; so many in idleness and vain discourses; and so many in the less necessary matters of the world.) Ask those that tempt you to mis-spend your time, whether at death and judgment they had rather themselves have a life of holy diligence to review, or a life consumed in vanity and transitory delights.

You will not suffer impertinencies to interrupt your counsels and serious business in the world: you'll tell intruders that you are busy, and cannot have time to attend to them. And are you going to heaven or hell, and have but a few days' time of preparation (God knows how few), and yet can you have while to pass this precious time in vain? O what would you not give ere long for one of the hours that you now mis-spend; when the oath is performed, Rev. x. 6, *that time shall be no longer*.

INFLUENCE OF A CHRISTIAN EXAMPLE.

A Female Servant.—"A Christian maid-servant was placed by providence in a family, the members of which, when she entered it, were strangers to the influence of true religion. Several young ladies were the objects of her charge. Frequently, in the evening, she proposed to read to them, when they were retiring to rest, a portion of the word of God; and though they had no taste for such an employment, yet as she was a favourite with the family, on account of her uniformly amiable temper and accommodating manners, they were willing to listen to her. For a long period they heard what she read with much indifference. In course of time, however, she was taken ill and died. During the whole of her illness she was eminently supported by the faith of the gospel, and the peace it bestowed, and at last closed her eyes animated by the hope of eternal life. The high degree of consolation she experienced on her death-bed, recalled to the recollection of her young ladies, after she was gone, some of those truths she used to read to them from the scriptures. They then began to see their vast importance; and gradually the greater part of a formerly gay and thoughtless family embraced the gospel, and were eminently distinguished for living under its influence. What a fullness of holy joy is thus prepared for this honoured maid-servant at the resurrection of the just, when she shall not only meet before the throne, those to whom she was more immediately useful by her active services in life, and especially by her exemplary death ; but also all who, in every subsequent age, even to the remotest period, shall receive spiritual benefit through her original instrumentality."

Fenelon.—-When Lord Peterborough lodged for a season with Fenelon, Archbishop of Cambray, he was so delighted with his piety and virtue, that he exclaimed at parting, "If I stay here any longer, I shall become a Christian in spite of myself."

EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS.

The following is an extract from a letter from near Ashton, inviting me to go to preach school sermons in the neighbourhood :—J.B.

"During the meeting it was asserted that Hulme and Bakewell did not differ in their opinions on the subject of baptism, as stated in your pamphlet, and it was argued that no reliance could be placed on your word, while you made statements so opposite to truth. This line of policy was adopted by *— **— *— **—, and *— **—, who had been sent as a deputation from the Ashton Leaders' Meeting, to dissuade us from appointing you as our preacher. A word or two on this subject will greatly oblige, your's truly, *— *—."

To this I returned the following :—

"What I have said about Hulme and Bakewell, every member of Conference knows to be true, that attended to Conference proceedings. That they afterwards pretended to come to an agreement, when they saw the use that was to be made of their difference, I know very well ; but that only made the matter worse, in my estimation. To see two men —but I leave them. I can easily understand the reason why my persecutors are so diligent in their efforts to slander me. If I were as good as Jesus Christ was, they would call me Beelzebub ; and if I could have sold my conscience, they would have made me president of Conference. If you act honestly, you will yourself come in for a share of their reproach, and you will then need no one to tell you how little credit is due to their statements.

A determination to judge for oneself, and to act in all things according to what one believes to be required of him by God, is, with the Leaders of the Conference, the unpardonable sin. A preacher may lie, get drunk, keep the worst company, idle away his time, run into debt, borrow money without repaying it, plunge himself into difficulties by worldly speculations, be the slave of his appetites, and the sport of his passions, and he shall be tolerated or forgiven : but if a man call in question the authority of Conference,—if he resolve to search the Scriptures, and interpret them for himself,—if he act on the principle of obeying God rather than man, and of preferring the dictates of conscience to the will of the leading members of Conference, he can neither be tolerated nor forgiven. This is the sin above all sins; the worst, the most infectious, the most mischievous and dangerous transgression of which a preacher in connexion with Conference can be guilty. Let a preacher show signs of respect to his own conscience,—let him give manifest indications that he will only believe the words of men so far as he finds them to agree with the words of God, and that he will only obey the laws of men, so far as he finds them to agree with the laws of God, and he must have no more peace. They will at once begin to insinuate things to his disadvantage, and send whispering calumies round the whole circle of his influence. He will be a pelagian, a unitarian, a Socinian, an enthusiast, a bold speculator, a dangerous person to young people, and it will be said there are serious doubts whether he is not an infidel at the bottom. If there are no signs of anything amiss in his moral character at present, it will be said, that he will be showing himself by and by, and they should not wonder if he does not turn out to be as bad as *—*—*— if he does not even become a Socialist.

If, after repeated efforts to break his spirit privately, and bring him into subserviency to the leading party in Conference, he still appears to be firm; then Conference persecutions will be commenced; then the preachers will be instructed to put the people on their guard against him; then the people's representatives will be cautioned against requesting him as their minister, and then, if his spirit be unconquerable,—if it be found that he will bow down his soul to none beneath the skies,—then a dark and desperate effort shall be made to effect his expulsion. And then, when he is expelled, every old slander that can be remembered, every matter that can be made to wear a doubtful and suspicious meaning, and every calumny that any one may choose to invent, will be eagerly taken up and employed to the utmost against him; and if he be not utterly overwhelmed and ruined, it will be because God, the Great Patron of the oppressed and injured, mercifully interferes in his behalf. No man on earth that has not experienced them, can imagine the cruel and malignant arts of persecuting priests. But I must conclude. I heartily thank my God that I have been preserved from bowing to their will. It is a terrible trial to be placed in their hands, and they who come out of such trials undestroyed, are miracles of mercy.

With best wishes for your welfare, and for the prosperity of your school,

I am, your's affectionately,
JOSEPH BARKER.

"When I heard of your being thrown overboard, I was not at all surprised, for, generally speaking, the religion of the day (or something called religion) is of that sort that, if a man dares speak the whole truth, and fearlessly stand by it, his name will be cast out as evil; but this is nothing new. It was so when Jesus Christ was on earth. The Apostles gave proof that it was so, and other great and good men since, have found it to be so. This savours of the world and is anti-christ; but be not discouraged, for neither the men of the world, nor the emisaries of Satan can take from us, though oft they have tried, the heart-cheering promise, "*the Lord will provide.*" Since I had the pleasure to see you, I have been still going on in the way towards the kingdom with increasing comfort and delight, and with gratitude I can say, I have made more progress in the divine life since I became a tee-totaler, *in six years*, than I did in the other twenty years before. The temperance cause is still going on here, and although apparently but slowly, yet we can enumerate about 150 or 160 reclaimed drunkards belonging to the society. And how many preventions will be known only in eternity. With best respects to Mrs Barker and family, I remain, dear friend, your's in the Lord,

JOHN JACKSON.

PROCEEDINGS IN THE NORTH.

On Saturday, June 5th, while the case of J. Barker was yet before Conference, a deputation, consisting of W. Ford and T. Scattergood, along with John Allen, delegate from Gateshead circuit, were sent off privately into the North, to prevent or to allay the excitement likely to be occasioned by the news of J. Barker's expulsion. The deputation reached Gateshead somewhere about noon on the Sabbath, and proceeded immediately to make arrangements for preaching in the Gateshead and Newcastle pulpits, and for meeting the friends. This, however, was not allowed. The friends in the North had already received the news of the Conference decision, and the pulpits on both sides of the Tyne were closed against the Conference deputation. The deputation sought admission into the meeting of the trustees of the Newcastle chapel, but the trustees kindly objected, and transacted their business alone. A meeting of the Gateshead circuit was called for Monday evening, which was very numerously attended. John Allen, the Gateshead delegate, wished to bring into the meeting the Conference deputation, but the meeting objected to allow any deputation to enter, until J. Barker and the Newcastle representative should be present, to state the case on the other side. The meeting asked whether J. Barker or J. Townsend knew that the Conference deputation had come down into the North? J. Allen answered, No. Other information was drawn forth, showing, that the deputation and those who had sent them, were acting altogether in a very suspicious manner, and it was resolved that no Conference deputation should be heard until their expelled minister, J. Barker, should be present. When the Newcastle people received word of the decision of Conference on J. Barker's case, they recalled their representative, J. Townsend, from the Conference, and on his arrival at Newcastle, a meeting was called to hear his report, when it was resolved that they should forthwith set aside the Conference authority, and hold their liberties henceforth under Christ himself.

On Thursday, June 10th, another deputation from Conference arrived, S. Hulme and J. H. Robinson. On Friday morning they sought a meeting with the Newcastle trustees, but the trustees preferred to sit alone, and to negotiate with the Conference deputation by means of a deputation of their own. The trustees had already offered the chapel to Conference, but Conference had not given them a decisive answer, whether they would take it or not. The Conference deputation offered the trustees five hundred pounds towards lessening the chapel debt, provided they would hold the chapel in trust for the Conference. The trustees refused. They then offered *six* hundred pounds; but the trustees still refused. Several trustees declared their unwillingness to hold the chapel in trust for Conference, even if Conference would pay off the whole debt. The trustees then offered the chapel to the Conference deputation again, if they choose to take it, and to allow them the benefit of the thousand pounds which had been collected towards its erection. The Conference deputation required time to consider, and time was accordingly allowed them.

At night the Conference deputation met the Gateshead circuit, and, along with John Allen, addressed the meeting in defence of Conference. J. Barker and J. Townsend addressed the meeting on the other side. The meeting was very numerous, consisting of not fewer, perhaps, than six or seven hundred persons. The cause of Conference made no way whatever. The strongest feeling of disapprobation of Conference proceedings, and of the principles advanced by the Conference deputation, was manifest throughout the meeting, and sometimes burst forth in powerful expression. It was resolved at the close of the meeting, by a majority of the whole meeting, with the exception, apparently, of about a dozen persons, that after hearing what had been advanced by the Conference deputation, in defence of Conference proceedings in the case of J. Barker and W. Trotter, and after hearing J. Barker and J. Townsend on the other side, it was the opinion of the meeting that the proceedings of the Conference had been exceedingly unconstitutional and unchristian.

The thanks of the meeting were proposed to the chairman, and passed apparently unanimously, and the meeting separated.

Another meeting of the Gateshead circuit, consisting of several hundreds, was held on the Monday following, June 14, when the whole meeting, except twenty-three, resolved to receive no more Conference preachers, till Conference had undone, as far as possible, what it had done. The minority of twenty-three who voted against this resolution, did, nevertheless, vote for an amendment which altogether condemned the proceedings of the Conference. Other resolutions were also passed at this meeting, which are published at the end of the "Brief Report of the Proceedings of Conference, &c., by J. Barker and W. Trotter," and need not be here repeated.

After the meeting, it was found that the Gateshead chapel had been made over to Conference, and that it was therefore entirely under the control of the few trustees who adhered to Conference. The circuit therefore took the chapel lately occupied by the Primitive Methodists, just by, a large and comfortable place, and there they continue to worship. Nearly the whole of the congregation, we understand, have left the Conference chapel, and gone to the other side of the street. What the Conference adherents intend to do, we cannot tell. Two preachers have been sent to them, A. Lynn and J. Nelson, but there appears to be very little probability that the Conference interest can ever be revived in this district. Meanwhile the friends that have left the Conference have formed themselves into an independent circuit, and are going on pleasantly and prosperously. Besides help from J. Barker, who preaches there twice every other sabbath, they have set apart two of their local brethren to the work of the ministry. The first quarterly meeting was held on Monday the 5th inst. It was well attended, and exceedingly peaceful and harmonious. Out of about six hundred members in the whole circuit, upwards of four hundred, it appeared, had given in their determination to be no longer under Conference authority. At Windy Nook, Wrekenton, Blaydon, Swalwell, and Hebburn, the societies had left without any division. The rest of the societies, one very small one excepted, are more or less divided.

The Newcastle Society has become an independent Christian church, and chosen J. Barker as their pastor. J. Barker, for the present, preaches in Salem Chapel, three mornings and three evenings every four Sabbaths.

About a fortnight ago information was received from the Annual Committee of the Conference Connexion, that they declined accepting the chapel, so that now the chapel is entirely in the power of the trustees. The congregations are greatly improved, the society appears to be happy and united, and there is a good prospect of prosperity.

The societies at Walker, Wallsend, St. Peter's Quay, and Elswick, have withdrawn themselves from under Conference authority, and joined themselves with the Society at Newcastle. Scotswood and Westmoor, we understand, still cling to Conference.

There are two Conference preachers stationed at Newcastle, James Wilson and —— Turnock; but there appears to be as little prospect of the Conference cause reviving in Newcastle, as in Gateshead.

The friends who have left the Conference have left to the few, who remain with Conference, all the property of the preachers' houses, &c. They have given up even that which was their own, resolved to cut off all occasion of reproach from such as might seek occasion.

A meeting of the Newcastle Society was held on Sabbath evening, June 20th, which was addressed by a number of the friends. It was stated in the meeting that the simple change which had been made by the church was, that Christ had been substituted for the Conference, and that henceforth, in all matters of doubt or dispute, they should have recourse to Christ, and acknowledge no other authority but his. The church, it was stated, would still retain its doctrines, its discipline, and its religious ordinances as formerly. They would still retain their prayer-meetings, their class-meetings, their leaders'-meetings, their quarterly meetings, their fellowship-meetings, and love-feasts. Baptism and the Lord's Supper would also be administered as usual, with this simple difference, that while those who might wish to have their offspring sprinkled would have them sprinkled as usual, those who would prefer having them simply presented to God, might have them so presented, each one rejoicing in his brother's liberty, and all forbearing one another in love.

It was stated at the meeting that particular attention would be paid to the young,—that efforts would be made to render the Sunday School as useful as possible, and that it was intended to have a Day School in connexion with the church also, that the friends might have security for the faithful and religious instruction of their offspring through the week, as well as on the Sabbath. It was also stated to be another object of the friends, to see that attention was paid to all the sick and the poor, that every case might be understood, and every one suitably provided for. A third object, to which it was stated the attention of the church would be directed, would be the promotion of useful knowledge, both among themselves and others, by the publication and circulation of useful books and pamphlets, &c. It was stated to be the special object of the church to do good in every possible way, especially by labouring to promote the spread of the religion of Christ in all its purity and in all its fulness.

The society met again on Tuesday the 6th instant, in the School-room, and took tea together; and after tea the members were addressed by several friends. J. G. Oncken, a German, and pastor of a Baptist church at Hamburgh, was introduced to the meeting by J. Barker, and spoke at some length, and with good effect. He warmly congratulated the society in having escaped from under the power of Conference, and placed itself under the sole authority of Jesus Christ; and expressed his earnest hopes that the church would be greatly prospered, and rendered an abundant blessing. He also gave much interesting information respecting the revival of religion on the continent, and his own labours and sufferings in the cause of Christ. The meeting was a very delightful one; and the members, after prayer, separated, both comforted and edified. Here matters rest at present. What further may take place may be communicated in future numbers of this work. Whatever else may take place, it appears to be perfectly settled that the separated churches have done with all Conference authority. May their gratitude for the liberty with which Christ has made them free, make them anxious in all things to understand and do the will of God. No reforms are of any avail, except so far as *individuals* are reformed. Every reforming movement will end in disappointment and disgrace, except so far as the parties concerned in them labour after a full conformity of soul and character to the will of God. Let the members of churches be sincere and thorough-going Christians, and everything else that is good will be sure to follow.

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THE

CHRISTIAN INVESTIGATOR,

AND

EVANGELICAL REFORMER;

For the Promotion of sound Religious Knowledge, and the Inculcation of Temperance and Peace, and of the whole Religion of Christ.

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THE CONDITIONS OF SALVATION.

Our desire, in the present article, is to explain a number of those words and phrases, which are employed in the Sacred Scriptures to express the conditions of our acceptance with God, and of our eternal salvation.

The conditions of salvation are expressed in Scripture in a great variety of ways. Our salvation is most frequently represented as depending on faith in Christ, or on obedience to his Gospel. On some occasions our salvation is represented as depending on our *receiving* Christ, or on our *coming* to Christ. Then again, in other portions of Scripture we are taught that we cannot be saved unless we are born again, or made new creatures: while in other places our salvation is represented as depending upon our denying ourselves, and taking up our cross; or upon our denying all ungodliness and worldly lusts, and living soberly, righteously, and godly.

The minds of some individuals, in reading the Sacred Scriptures, are perplexed with this variety of expression. It appears to them as if the Scriptures were not exactly consistent with themselves; as if they made the salvation of men to depend at one time, on one thing, and at another time, on another thing: and they are at a loss how to proceed so as to make their salvation sure. It is our desire to meet the case of such individuals: it is our wish, by explaining a number of the expressions employed by Scripture in stating the conditions of salvation, to enable them to see clearly what it is that God requires of them.

One of the commonest expressions employed in the New Testament to describe the conditions of salvation is that of faith. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; he that believeth not shall be damned." "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life." "These things are written," saith John, "that ye should believe that Jesus is the Christ; and that believing ye should have life through him." "Being justified by faith," says the Apostle Paul, "we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ." Our first endeavour must therefore be, to explain the nature of saving faith: to show what that belief in Christ is, on which our salvation is made to depend.

That faith by which a man is justified or saved includes three things: 1. A belief of Gospel truth, 2. Submission to Gospel authority, and 3. Reliance upon Gospel promises. The faith by which we are justified and saved includes, in the first place, a belief of Gospel truth. The Gospel reveals to us the character of God, it unfolds the mysteries of his providence, it makes us acquainted with our origin and our nature; it reveals to us the plan of redemption; gives us a view of the Redeemer's character, and a history of his redeeming work; it brings life and immortality to light; placing in the most affecting view the solemn subjects of a future judgment, the resurrection of the dead, the future happiness of the righteous, and the eternal punishment of the wicked. The first part of that faith by which we are saved consists in a belief of those doctrines; in the reception of these doctrines of the Gospel as true.

The faith by which we are saved, includes, in the second place—a submission of the soul to Gospel authority. The Gospel is not only a statement of facts and truths, but a system of laws. It not only teaches us what is the character of God, but it requires us to love and serve him: it not only brings to light life and immortality, but teaches us how we ought to live on earth in order to secure eternal life. It requires us to deny ourselves,—to resign the government of ourselves into the hands of God, and no longer to do our own will, but the will of him that formed us. It calls on us to deny ourselves of all ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world. It prescribes the whole of our duty, both towards ourselves, our Maker, and our fellow-men. And to submit to the will of God as therein revealed,—to yield ourselves to his authority,—to place ourselves under his laws, with the determination to be governed by them, is the second part of true faith,—the second step in the way of salvation. Without this, a belief of Gospel truths can avail us nothing. The faith which "*availeth*" as the Apostle speaketh, the faith which brings salvation, is a "faith which *worketh by love*,"—a faith which destroys our natural selfishness, and awakens in the mind love to God and love to man,—a faith which sanctifies,—which produces such an effect upon the soul as to bring it into full subjection to the will of God. The Redeemer teaches plainly that no faith can secure our acceptance with God, and our admission into eternal life, but such a faith as leads us to do God's will. "Not every one that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my father which is in heaven."

Hence also, in concluding his sermon on the Mount, in which he had declared and unfolded the great principles by which God would have mankind to be ruled, he said, "Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken to a wise man, which built his house upon a rock; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it." And in every case when men, who *believed the truth*, came to ask the Redeemer what they should do to inherit eternal life, the Redeemer gave them, in effect, the same directions. When persons, who did *not* yet believe the truth, came to ask what they should do to work the works of God (John vi. 28), Christ said to them, "*This* is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." But when Nicodemus, who already believed Christ to be a teacher come from God, and who, of course, regarded his doctrines as true, came to him, the Saviour spake differently, saying, "Except a man be born again, he cannot enter the kingdom of God." And when the young man came (Matt. xix. 16.) and asked the Saviour "What good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?" The Saviour answered, "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." And this was his uniform doctrine.

And this was the doctrine of the Apostles. This doctrine is taught by the apostle James, in the second chapter of his Epistle, where he says, with the greatest plainness, "What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith [a belief of the truth], and have not works? Can faith [a mere belief of the truth] save him? If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; while at the same time ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well, [so far as thou goest; but it is not enough to salvation, for] the devils also believe and tremble." They not only believe the truth, but their faith has such an effect upon them, as to make them tremble, yet still it secures to them no advantage. And so will it be with you, my friends. If you should believe every fact and every statement of truth recorded in the whole of the Sacred Scriptures, if your belief did not subdue your soul, and bring you into full subjection to the will of God, it could do nothing towards securing your salvation. You may believe; you may be alarmed; you may feel troubled; you may tremble; you may weep; yet all this is nothing unless you also acknowledge the authority of God, and bow yourselves to his will. Your faith may throw you into an agony; may render you unable to sleep by night; and it may hang around you clouds of melancholy gloom by day, but all will be unavailing, without a hearty surrender of the soul to the will of God. Thou must know, O vain man, that faith without works is *dead!* Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works his faith was made perfect? And then it was —when his faith thus led him to yield obedience to God's commands —that the Scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness; and he was called the Friend of God. Ye see, then, how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only. For as the body without the soul is dead, so faith without works is dead also. Hence the Apostle Paul, in his Epistle to the Romans, x. 10., tells us, that with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and that with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. He teaches us that the faith which availeth to our salvation, is a faith that *worketh by love,* and that nothing can secure the blessings of salvation without a *new creature,* and *keeping the commandments of God.*

Submission of soul to the will of God, and obedience to his word, entered into the faith of those worthies that are mentioned in the eleventh chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews. In every case, we see a belief of the truth and obedience to the will of God united. We see it in the case of Abel. Abel not only believed what God taught him, but under the influence of this faith, he did what God commanded. Hence the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews says, By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained the testimony that he was righteous. The works of Cain were evil, and the works of Abel were righteous; and this was the reason why the sacrifice of Cain was rejected, and the sacrifice of Abel accepted. We see the same principle exemplified in the case of Noah. By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his house; by doing which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith. Here the whole process of salvation is seen. God speaks, and foretels a flood; Noah believes, and his belief awakens his fears. Along with the declaration respecting the coming flood, God gives to Noah a direction to prepare an ark, and Noah prepares an ark forthwith! God assures Noah that in so doing he shall be saved; Noah trusts in God, and he is saved accordingly. And so with Moses. By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharoah's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward. Heb. xi. 24. He not only believed what God had said respecting his people, but he resolved to cast in his lot with them, and in obedience to God's will to look for a share of the blessings promised to them. In this same way must a belief in God's truth work upon our hearts, if we would be accepted of God and saved. It must not only excite our hopes and fears, but it must bend our wills; it must lead us to renounce our sins, and to submit our necks to the yoke of Christ. It was in this way that those who first believed the Gospel looked for salvation. Hence, when the inhabitants of Samaria believed the Gospel preached by Philip, as an avowal of their determination to live in newness of life, they were baptized all of them, both men and women. And when the Gospel was preached at Antioch, those who were wishful to be saved, not only believed, but *turned to the Lord*. Acts xi. 21. And such must be the case with all who would obtain the salvation of the Gospel: they must not only believe Christ's doctrine, but they must be born again: they must be converted, and become as little children: they must deny themselves, take up their cross, and follow Jesus Christ. This is the second thing which is included in saving faith.

When a man has gone thus far, when he truly believes the Gospel, and submits his soul to Gospel authority, the next thing is, to rely on Gospel promises. The Gospel not only declares certain truths, and inculcates certain duties, but also promises numerous blessings to those who rightly receive it. It promises pardon of sin, and acceptance with God, and adoption into God's family: it promises the assurance of God's favour, peace of mind, joy in the Holy Ghost, consolation in affliction, support and comfort in temptation, light to direct our steps in times of doubt and darkness, and strength to enable us to do and suffer all the will of God. It promises the victory over death, a resurrection to a better life, and all the glories and pleasures of the eternal world. The third part of the work of faith is to rely on those promises, and to expect to receive all those blessings at the hands of God. These three things—a belief of Gospel truth, submission to Gospel authority, and reliance upon Gospel promises, make up the whole of true saving faith. Nothing can be added, and nothing can be withdrawn. Without this faith entire, it is impossible to obtain the salvation and consolations of the Gospel; and *with* this faith, it is impossible that a man should miss of salvation.

Some speak of saving faith as if it consisted of only *one* of those particulars. Some speak of it as consisting in a bare belief and acknowledgment of the truth of the Gospel; others speak of it as if it consisted merely in a sure trust and confidence in Jesus Christ; and others speak as if it did not matter much what a man believed, provided he paid respect to his outward general conduct: but they are all wrong. Those who make faith to consist in nothing more than a bare belief of Gospel truth, are mere opinionists; those who think nothing of importance but attention to the outside duties of religion, are but a kind of Pharisees; while those who make the whole of saving faith to consist in relying on Jesus Christ, are antinomians. If we would be true Christian believers, we must have all these things in one: we must receive the doctrine of the gospel as true; we must submit to its requirements as right; and we must rely with confidence on all its promises of blessings.

The man who thus believes is saved. He is accepted of God, and if he continues thus to believe, he will be saved for ever. Whosoever receives the truth, and lives in subjection to the will of God, and relies on the promises which God has given, shall obtain every blessing of the new and better covenant, both in this world and in the world to come. He will obtain the forgiveness of sin; he will be admitted into the family of God; he will be blessed with an assurance of the divine favour; his soul will be transformed into the divine image; the love of God will be shed abroad in his heart; he will have free access to the throne of grace; he will be delivered from the fear of death; he will be delivered from anxiety respecting his earthly lot; he will be delivered from the fear of man; he will have a peace that passeth all understanding, and a joy unspeakable and full of glory; he will be enabled to glory in tribulation; to count it all joy when he falls into divers trials; he will be blessed with a good hope of eternal life; and after living in the enjoyment of innumerable blessings on earth, he will be welcomed to the enjoyment of a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory in the world to come.

But nothing less will bring salvation to a man that lives under the full light of the Gospel dispensation. However correct a man's notions of Gospel doctrine may be, and however strong his convictions of their truth; all will be of no use to him, unless his soul be brought into subjection to the will of God. And though a man may rely on Christ, and trust in the promises of the Gospel, he will be never the nearer to salvation, if he still clings to his own will, and refuses to give up his soul in humble obedience to the will of God. The man who has not surrendered his soul to the will of God, has no *right* to rely on Christ; he has no *right* to claim the promises of the Gospel. To rely on Christ, while our hearts stand out against the will of God, is great presumption. If we would rely on Christ to any purpose, we must both welcome the truths of the Gospel to our hearts, and give up ourselves to God, with a full determination to do all his will. Such is the nature of that faith by which we are saved. It will be seen from the preceding statements, that true saving faith includes the whole of Christianity, and that, in the language of the New Testament, to be saved by faith, is, in effect, the same as to be saved by becoming sincere Christians. We know that the word faith is frequently used in the New Testament to signify simply the belief of the truth, but at other times, it is plainly used to signify the full subjection of the soul to God, and the confident reliance of the soul on Gospel promises. And even when faith is used to signify no more than a mere belief of Gospel doctrine, it is, when used to express the condition of our salvation, frequently accompanied with such expressions as show us that a belief of the truth does not save us, except so far as it produces in our souls subjection or obedience to the will of God. There is not a passage in the whole New Testament to warrant any one to expect salvation by merely believing the Gospel to be true, or by carelessly relying on Jesus Christ; there is not a passage in the whole New Testament to authorize any one to expect salvation, who does not believe with such a faith as includes in it the germs, the elements, the soul and substance, of the whole religion of Christ, or which is not of such a character and energy as to renovate the soul and to transform the life.—And then it is that faith secures to man the forgiveness of sin, and acceptance with God, when its power is such as to restore man to the spirit of obedience—when its power is such as to destroy self-will, and bring the whole soul into subjection to the obedience of Christ.

Receiving Jesus Christ, is exactly the same thing as *believing* on him. This is manifest from the words of John, in the first chapter of his Gospel. "He came to his own, but his own *received* him not; but to as many as *did receive* him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God; even to as many as *believed on his name.*" Here it is plain that receiving Christ, and believing on Christ's name, are used to signify the same thing. And the plain meaning of the words *receiving Christ*, may make this still more manifest. Christ is a teacher; and to receive him is to place ourselves under his instructions and to receive his lessons. Christ is a king; and to receive him is to acknowledge his authority, and to place ourselves under his government, with the determination to live according to his laws. Christ is a priest, who by his sufferings and death has become a propitiation for our sins, and the author of eternal salvation to all that obey him; and to receive him is to trust in him for the pardon of our sins, and for the bestowment of every blessing needful to our salvation. But this amounts exactly to the same thing as what we have previously stated to be included in saving faith. Receiving Christ as our teacher, is exactly the same as believing the doctrines of the Gospel. Receiving Christ as our king, is the same as submitting our souls to Gospel authority; and receiving Christ as our priest, is the same as relying upon him, or trusting in Gospel promises. And as one part of faith will not save us without the other, so a partial receiving of Christ will not save us. It is not enough to receive him as our prophet, or as our priest only; we must receive him entire as he is set forth in the Gospel. It will be of no avail to receive him as our prophet, and to learn his doctrine, unless we receive him also as our priest and king: and it would be of no avail to receive him as our priest, unless we receive him also as our prophet and our king. Christ will not allow himself to be thus divided. If men will not have him to reign over them,—if they will not submit their understandings to his doctrines, and their wills to his authority, their reliance upon the sacrifice which he offered by his death, will only subject them to everlasting disappointment.

Salvation is frequently represented as depending on our being born again, or converted, or created anew, but these forms of expression all mean the same thing as the expressions already considered. To be born again is to have the understanding enlightened, the will subdued to God, the affections purified, and the life transformed by the reception of Gospel truth into the soul, and by the accompanying influences of the Holy Spirit. A man hears the Gospel, and believes it. His belief of the Gospel awakens within him a new set of feelings, and leads him to renounce his sins, and give his heart to God; and in so doing he is so thoroughly changed by the power of divine truth and the influences of the spirit of God, as to become quite a new creature; old things pass away, and, behold, all things become new. All that the Gospel requires of men, whatever be the form of expression used; amounts simply to these three things, a belief of the Gospel itself, submission of the soul to the influence of Gospel truth, and to the authority of Gospel precepts, and a reliance of the soul on those great and precious promises with which the Gospel of Christ abounds. If a man be an unbeliever, the first step towards salvation in his case is, to believe the Gospel; to receive it as the truth of God: if a man already believes the Gospel, the next step towards salvation in his case, is, to yield to what the Gospel requires; to renounce his sins, and give his heart to God, resolved to walk in newness of life. If a man has both received the Gospel as the word of God, and submitted his soul to its authority and influence, he will then, as a matter of course, rest his soul on Gospel promises, expecting from God, through Jesus Christ, all those blessings which are needful to his felicity both in the present world and in the world to come. *

IMPROVEMENT OF THE MINISTRY.

A few months ago a pamphlet was published entitled "A Course of Study for Young Ministers on Probation." The author of the pamphlet wrote to the writer of this article requesting his candid opinion as to the merits of the publication. The following is his reply; and as it contains a statement of his views on the important subject of ministerial reform; and as his views are there stated with that freedom and familiarity which is peculiar to private, friendly correspondence, he hopes that its insertion here may tend to the promotion of sound, scriptural views of the all-important subject discussed in it.

Copy of a Letter to W. Cooke, Belfast.

11 Mo. 13, 1840.

DEAR FRIEND,

I consider your letter as a token of respect and kindness, and I should feel pleasure in returning you my opinion respecting your pamphlet, if it were possible, but I fear it is not. I should not feel free to give you my opinion, without fully stating the grounds of my opinion, and to do this would require a letter as long as your lecture perhaps, if not much longer. I should have to give you my views of the present state of the ministry generally, and of the present plan of calling persons out into the ministry, and of employing them after they are thus called out. And I have neither time to write down my views on these subjects, nor should I feel quite at liberty to obtrude them upon your attention at present. It is my conviction that both in the manner of calling out persons for the ministry, and of employing them when called out, there is something radically wrong, and that all efforts to effect such improvements in the ministry as are desirable, will in a great measure, prove unavailing unless the radical evil be cured. The condition of a young man, while a probationer for (or in) the ministry among us, is one of the most painful and perilous situations in which a young disciple of Christ can be placed. He comes out, before he has had time to acquire either the mental vigour, or the intellectual resources, or the experience or piety, that are necessary to fit a person for the solemn and all-important work of a minister of Christ. And then he is expected, not merely to tell the people what he has well learned, and what he can declare to them with the authority of one who has known and experienced its truth, but he must talk to the people *so* long and *so* often, whatever be the state, and whatever be the furniture of his mind. Perhaps he goes out with three or four sermons, and has to preach them all to the same congregation the first week or fortnight; and what shall he do then? He ought, if there be either reason or mercy in the universe, to be allowed to read, and think, and write, and labour in some useful way, till he is furnished afresh, and prepared for further ministerial communications. But is it so? No such thing. He is engaged as a minister: he is, in effect, hired to preach so many sermons, to such and such congregations, and either he must preach those sermons, or he must leave his situation. No allowance is made for him. He must do the same amount of labour, so far as preaching is concerned, as the man that has been engaged in the work twenty or thirty years. He is, in consequence, frequently driven to extremities for want of sermons, and in his anxiety to save his credit and his situation by obtaining the necessary quantity of sermons, he is led to form habits which render him comparatively useless and miserable all his life afterwards. One gets the sermons of other men, and commits them to memory; another commits to memory skeletons of sermons, and tries to fill them up as he can; and another hurriedly prepares a collection of unripe thoughts of his own, and presents them to his congregation. One here and there may be found who, in consequence of having stronger powers of mind, or better stores of information, is able to go through his first year to better advantage; but such are very rare. The generality are so hurried and troubled, that their souls are almost distracted. Of what use is a course of study to these? They cannot attend to any such thing. The moment they would begin to read, they are haunted and confounded with the question, "what must I preach from next?" They have nothing ready; there is nothing that they can think about; and yet they are obliged to preach. Instead, therefore, of sitting down soberly, prayerfully, and solemnly, to study the oracles of God, to learn the revelations of truth and duty which they contain, he flies to his skeleton book, and partly in searching for a skeleton which will suit his taste; and partly in commiting the skeleton to memory, the whole of the time which should have been spent in useful study is thrown away. He cannot read as a learner and a lover of truth ought to read: nor can he think or write as a man that would improve his mind ought to think and write. He can do nothing as he ought to do it. I am not picturing from imagination; I am giving you realities. I have known persons that have been in exactly the state that I am describing, and I know persons that are in this state at this very moment. I have been in the same state myself, and I know its miseries by woeful experience. I know persons that are in this miserable state who have been out more than eighteen months; and one I know in this state, who has been preaching for several years. I was last year exhorting a person to give himself diligently to reading, and to seek a clear and comprehensive and certain knowledge of the whole Christian system; but he did not appear to understand me. I named a number of works which I thought would furnish him with a great deal of useful information, and assist him greatly in acquiring the knowledge which I was urging him to seek; still there was an unaccountable stare about the young man, and it was plain he did not acquiesce in what I had been saying. Do you think that the advice which I am giving is not good advice? said I. "Well," he replied, "I will tell you how I am situated, and I will leave you to judge." And he told me how he had been hurried in preparing sermons for the pulpit; how many sermons he was obliged to write or transcribe; and he declared to me that it was utterly *impossible* for him to read for the general improvement of his own mind. And yet this young man had had opportunities of improvement before he came out, which many young preachers have not. I was speaking to another young man lately on the same subject, and urging the same advice; and I told him of certain complaints that I had heard of the barrenness of his discourses, and I had, from him also, for substance, the same answer. He declared to me that it was impossible for him to pursue such a course of reading as I had recommended. He acknowledged that his sermons were comparatively barren, and that his thoughts were crude and confused, and he also acknowledged that he considered the course of reading which I had recommended perfectly right, and told me he should be glad to follow it, but then, said he, what must I do for sermons? I could follow your advice, said he, if I were not required to preach until I had got something fresh for the people, but I cannot as it is. I saw how he was situated; and what could I say? And there the poor young man was left, to be goaded by the demand for sermons almost to madness, and to be compelled either to ruin his mental powers, and do violence to his moral feelings as well, or to acknowledge that the work demanded of him was more than he could do, and honourably return to his former station. Everything in the situation of a young probationer under present arrangements, is unnatural, and if his soul is not ruined, it will be little short of a miracle.

If the ministry is to be extensively improved,—if preachers of the Gospel are to become what the enlightened and devoted friends of religion would have them to be,—our plans of proceeding with respect to the ministry must be entirely changed. Men must be allowed to cultivate and store their minds at leisure. They must be treated naturally, and not required to do the work of a man while they have only the strength of a child. At present we follow the example of the cruel Pharoah, who demanded the usual number of bricks, while he refused the usual and necessary allowance of straw. By forcing the souls of young ministers to labour beyond their power, we break up and destroy their mental and moral constitutions, and frequently render them a kind of useless, heartless, miserable, and mischievous moral monsters, through the whole of their after life.

The first step towards the proper improvement of the ministry, in my judgment, should be to admit into the number of regular ministers no novices,—no young, unfurnished, inexperienced christians. It is my conviction that to separate persons from their callings, and set them apart exclusively to the work of the ministry, who are not more than eighteen, twenty, or twenty-two years of age, or who have not been more than two or three years converted to God, is not right. A new-born soul ought to have time to grow, as well as a new-born child.—And a new-born soul ought to be accustomed to *labour* gradually, as is the case with people's bodies. Young men and young converts ought to be allowed to inure themselves to labour in the work of the ministry just as their powers gather strength. They ought, also, before they are fully separated to the ministry, to be required to give proof both of a well-disciplined and well-furnished mind, and of a truly Christian zeal and disinterestedness of soul. Christ did not commence his public ministry till he was about thirty years of age, nor did John the Baptist. Though the disciples of Christ were men who had improved their talents under a previous dispensation, yet Christ did not send them forth till they had followed him, and enjoyed the benefit both of his public and private instructions and example for several years. The seventy he sent out earlier, but their work was not like the work of a preacher among us; they had simply to run round the country, proclaiming, the kingdom of heaven is at hand, and confirming their proclamation with miracles. And even the eleven who were sent forth,—carefully and freely as Christ had instructed them, and miraculously as they were endowed, had no such labours with respect to preaching, as preachers amongst us have. The youngest, perhaps, and the most recent convert to the religion of Christ that was sent forth as a general preacher of the gospel, was Paul; but he had been well instructed in the religion of the Jews, and in the writings of Moses and the prophets, and though but lately converted to Christ, he had long lived in all good conscience towards God, and was therefore very different from most young persons and young converts that offer themselves for the ministry in our days. And Paul's work, arduous as it was, was nothing like the racking work required of a young preacher who is stationed in a Methodist Circuit.—Nor is it improbable that Paul was upwards of thirty years of age when he commenced his labours as an apostle. In short, the situation of a young preacher in our connexion, as well as in most other religious bodies of the present day, is such, under present arrangements, and under the usual method of proceeding, in calling them out, as to render it almost impossible for him to become a great and good man, an able minister, and a bright example of the religion of Christ. Before we can hope for such improvements in the ministry as almost all are agreed to desire, the plan of taking out such young, unfurnished, and inexperienced persons as are so commonly taken out into the ministry at present, must be laid aside.

The next step necessary, in my judgment, would be to require nothing of any one as a condition of admission into the number of ministers, but such things as constitute a minister's real qualifications for his work. I would require of all who offered themselves for the work of the ministry, a clear and comprehensive knowledge of the religion of Christ, a sound faith, decided piety, zeal for the glory of God, love for the souls of men, ability to instruct and persuade, and whatever else the Apostle Paul and Jesus Christ required of a minister of the gospel; but I would require nothing more; I would require no subscription to creeds or systems of men; no pledge of obedience to the will of Conference; no abstinence from marriage, not for a single day. I would reject no man because he had a wife and family, and I would reject no man because he was thirty or forty years of age. If we want piety and knowledge and zeal and abilities, admit none that are without them; and reject none that have them. Do not act on the principle that all things else are nothing, unless a man will subscribe an unscriptural form of words, promise not to marry for four or five years without the consent of the Conference, and engage to pay into a fund which he may not be able to approve. Let everything but piety, and ability, and soundness of faith, and christian zeal, be counted as nothing; let the possession of these, along with such a number of years or such an amount of experience or discretion as the work requires, be the only qualifications required of any one. Lay down this principle, and act upon it, and the improvement of the ministry will then be made practicable.

Another step which appears to me to be necessary is, the revival of pure religion among the people, and the more general diffusion of religious knowledge, and of general information among professors of religion generally. We must not only look for this as the result of a reformed ministry, but, strange as it may seem, we must have it first in some measure, as the *means* of obtaining a reformed ministry. The young persons who are taken into the ministry resemble the societies in which they received their spiritual birth and training. If societies are noisy, hollow, earthly, ignorant, or regardless of the high principles of gospel piety, the preachers which spring up among them will be likely to partake more or less of the same character. If societies are solid, thoughtful, intelligent, disinterested, zealous, liberal, regardful of every Christian obligation, and abundant in labours for the cause of God and the good of mankind, the preachers that rise up among them will be likely to have much of the same character. If then we would have reading, thinking, intelligent, laborious, able and useful ministers, we must labour to raise the standard of intelligence and piety, and zeal among the churches. The few who see and lament existing evils; the few who have power to speak either in person or through the press; the few who possess the principal influence with the connexion, must unite in some plan of efforts for diffusing through the connexion clearer and fuller light, and leading the people to higher attainments in knowledge and true holiness. They must circulate books adapted to this purpose; they must preach and lecture to this end; they must establish libraries, use the press, and employ all the influence and machinery of the connexion for this end; and they must institute meetings for improvement in knowledge and piety and general usefulness in all the societies. Each Christian society must be itself a little college, and every youthful member must be a student. Each one would have opportunities both of obtaining and communicating information; and if the more diligent and gifted members were not taken away to be employed as ministers in other places, till they had reached the age of twenty-eight or thirty, there would be such efficiency and stability given to the means of improvement in each circuit, as would always secure a plentiful supply of enlightened, devoted, experienced, able, and well-tried ministers of the gospel.

And it is in this stage, while in the bosom of their own religious societies, and before they are called to labour exclusively in the work of the ministry, that men should obtain the principal part of that knowledge, and go through the principal part of that course of study which you recommend in your lecture. This should in fact be the time and the state of their probation, nor should they be sent forth till they have given the most satisfactory proof of their fitness for the ministerial work. Let this step be taken in addition to the preceding ones, and I have no doubt but a foundation will be laid for such a reformation of the ministry as will raise it to a state that it has not seen from the days of the first Apostles to the present time.

Another step necessary to be taken in order to the thorough reformation of the ministry is, the renunciation of all human authority in religious matters, and a return to the plain, unadulterated, and unmutilated Gospel of Christ, as the only visible standard of religious truth and duty. On this subject you have said nothing in your lecture. You have intimated the necessity of a young minister in his first year seeking to establish himself in the creed of the denomination to which he belongs, but you have said nothing in any part of the lecture about bringing all his views and practices to the standard of truth and duty laid down in the sacred writings of the New Testament. This I consider a very serious defect in your lecture, especially when I consider the great and constant proneness there is in men to call men their masters, and to rest in tradition, instead of coming, in all things to the truth, as it is in Jesus. There ought always to be a recurrence to the sacred oracles, and no man should be employed as a minister wholly devoted to the work, until he is both prepared to bring all things to the proper test, and has brought the sentiments and rules of the community to which he belongs to the test. On *morals* you acknowledge the New Testament to be the only perfect standard; why not lay down the same principle with respect to matters of truth?

But the Saviour and the Apostles do not appear to have had any fixed salary, or any beneficent fund. They held the principle that the labourer is worthy of his hire, that they who minister at the altar, should live of the altar; and when they *needed* supplies, they accepted them from those to whom they ministered, but nothing further. If they could follow a useful trade they did so; and when they could not, they were content with a bare or homely supply of their wants. They never mimicked the rich of the world; they never sought to gain respect by imitating the manners, and conforming to the customs of such as were then reputed the respectable of the world. Christ was as poor as he well could be; he had not where to lay his head. The Apostles appear to have imitated their Lord in this respect, and to have kept themselves as low in circumstances as possible. This appears to have been the case with Paul especially. They were examples of deadness to the world, of contempt for fleshly pleasures and accommodations, of trust in God, of freedom from anxiety about to-morrow, and of full resignation to the will of God. They did not court the rich, nor would they allow themselves to be in any way dependent on the rich. Nor does there appear to have been any thing like fixed salaries given to any in apostolical times. One temptation therefore to unworthy men to enter the ministry which exists at present, did not exist in those times, at least not under the same powerful form as at present. If we were to relinquish our salaries, and allow our beneficent fund, so called, to fall to the ground, and leave ourselves dependent only on the providence of God, accepting the free-will offerings of the people only so far as our necessities required, and turning all the remaining resources of the church into channels of general benevolence, another important step, as it appears to me, would be taken in the way of ministerial reform. These are among the things which appear to me to be necessary to be done, before any such reformation can take place among the ministers of the Gospel generally, as all the enlightened friends of the religion of Christ are desirous to behold.

You will therefore see that I could not, with propriety, while I hold my present views, recommend your lecture as calculated to bring about the reform of the ministry which is so much required. If I were only to compare your lecture with most other lectures on the same subject, I could speak of it favourably; but viewing it as an attempt to bring about a thorough reformation of the ministry, or to lead the way to such a reformation, I could not speak of it so favourably. Viewed in this light, I should be obliged to pronounce it deficient. If it had professed to be a course of study for young men in connection with our religious societies, I should have been prepared to speak more favourably of it; but even then I must have commended it with several exceptions. There are several books of the greatest importance which are left out of your list, and there are many of those which are recommended, which I could not have recommended. Nor could I have recommended anything under the name of "light reading." Nor could I have sanctioned what is said about style. I do not consider either Robert Hall, or John Harris, or Olinthus Gregory, or even Richard Watson, as examples of a suitable style for a preacher of the Gospel. Something more simple than the style of these writers is necessary, if we would convey Gospel truth clearly and powerfully to the hearts of the great masses of mankind.

Something ought to have been said on the study of history, which is not said in your lecture. History generally is written by men of earthly, sensual, and devilish minds, and historical reading generally tends to make men earthly, sensual, and devilish. Historians praise things which ought to be condemned: and they speak lightly of things which ought to be highly commended. They tell things that would have been better forgotten, and they pass by things which ought to have been recorded. They also talk of things in altogether a wrong spirit. They speak of war, and martial courage, and a love of martial glory, and feats of arms, and stratagems, in a way calculated to demoralize the reader's soul. The tendency of history generally is to inspire selfishness, and to alienate the soul from the simplicity and tenderness of Jesus Christ. The works of Hume and Gibbon, which you recommend, are especially objectionable; they are little better than voluminous falsifications, studied perversions and partial representations of history. The *aim* of both these writers was to *injure the interests of religion*, and the *double poison of infidelity and licentiousness* runs through almost all that they have written. On the other hand, the history of the Quakers, by Sewell and others, is the most ennobling and sanctifying history, next to that of the Apostles, that I have ever read.

The works recommended under the head of Moral Philosophy I consider inferior, and some of them seriously objectionable. Montesquieu is a very flippant writer, and exceedingly erroneous, and a spirit inimical to the religion of Christ runs through the whole work. I believe that Mackintosh's work is in its principles and plan the same as Grotius on the law of war and peace, and if so, it is very much of a jumble of discordant principles, partly Jewish, partly Pagan, and partly Christian. I have not read Chalmer's Moral Philosophy, but I should be afraid that it is not strictly Christian, if I should judge of its chcracter from other things that I have seen of his. I have not read Wardlaw's through, but in what I did read, I found nothing like the simple, and strict, and solemn morality of the Gospels and Epistles. Some of Wesley's Sermons, Baxter's Christian Directory, &c., Law's Serious Call, and his Treatise on Perfection, Clarkson's Portraiture of Quakerism, Quaker's Advices, Penn's Practical Works, and Jonathan Dymond on Morality, are the best works on Christian Morality that I recollect to have met with.

There are many things in the lecture which I think very good, especially what you say about the great importance of genuine and devoted piety, the necessity of diligence, the folly of beginning to study with a *priori* and *a posteriori*, *&c.*, of the New Testament being the only perfect and infallible standard of true morality, but there are many other things which I cannot relish or approve. I ought, in speaking of the books which you recommend, to have said a few words about S. Drew's Works on the Being and Attributes of God, the Immortality of the Soul, and the Resurrection. I have an exceedingly low opinion of these works. I take them to be very little else but clouds of smoke and darkness, volumes of misty delusions. I should judge that such works would be likely to have a very similar effect on readers, to the effect of the sermon you refer to on page 17, on the Evidences of Christianity: if it were possible for men to be made infidels, I should think that, next to a course of profligacy, nothing could be likelier to make them such, than the perusal of such works as those of S. Drew. There are many things in them hard to be understood, but, as far as I can recollect, I never met with a passage which was not, when explained, either a mere trifling truism, a flat contradiction of plain truth, an unworthy quibble, or a strange, palpable, and unaccountable blunder. I cannot pursue these remarks further, or I should have liked to make some observations on Smith's Wealth of Nations, Dwight's System of Theology, Robinson's Scripture Characters, Boswell's Life of Johnson, and a number of the poetical works mentioned in your list of books. I think the list of books recommended very good on the whole, but the interests of Christian truth and Christian morality would have been better served, if a few judicious remarks had accompanied the mention of several of the writers whose works you recommend to be read.

And now I must draw towards a conclusion. I had no expectation, when I began this letter, of writing more than one or two pages. I hope the liberty I have taken will not be construed into any token of unkindness or disrespect. I have a very favourable opinion both of your piety and understanding, and I am not aware that there is more than one opinion of your abundant and zealous labours in the cause of Christ. I respect you highly, and I love you sincerely, and I believe there is but one minister in our Connexion whose friendship I should more highly esteem than yours. But I have my own views, and I cannot dissemble them, and when asked for my opinion on subjects, I must, if I speak at all, speak freely what is in my soul. You asked me for my candid opinion respecting your pamphlet, and, without at first intending it, I have expressed my views and feelings on the subject freely and at large. And now I have only to request, that as this communication is made in love to you, and out of respect to you and to the cause of God, that it may be received in love. I have no claim upon you for an answer, and yet, if you could conveniently write me an answer, containing your views of my observations, I should esteem it a great favour. If you should not feel free, or if you should not find leisure thus to favour me with your views, I shall still continue to rejoice in your useful labours for the salvation of mankind, to give thanks to God that men of such zeal and character and abilities are graciously given to his people, and I hope I shall continue in love to you, in love to God, and in love to God's church, and to the souls of all mankind, to pray that God may long spare your laborious and useful life, that he may lead you forward in all the paths of truth and holiness, and that after he has blessed you and made you a blessing upon earth, he may grant you the unspeakable felicity to enjoy, in company with your wife and children, your Christian friends, and all the multitudes of happy souls that ever lived on earth, the riches, and the glories, and the rapturous delights of the heaven of heavens, for ever and for ever.

I am,
Your affectionate Friend and Brother,
JOSEPH BARKER.

THE WAY TO BRING ABOUT BETTER DAYS (Concluded).

"It is said, that when the town of Calais, after a seige of twelve months, wished to surrender to Edward III., he demanded that six of the most considerable citizens should be sent to him, carrying the keys of the city in their hands, bareheaded and barefooted, with ropes about their necks, to be sacrificed to his vengeance. This cruel demand threw the inhabitants into a state of unutterable consternation, and they found themselves incapable of coming to any resolution in so distressful a situation. At last, one of the principal inhabitants, Eustace de St. Pierre, stepped forth, and declared himself willing to encounter death for the safety of his friends and companions; another, animated by his example, made a like generous offer ; a third and a fourth presented themselves to the same fate, and the whole number was soon completed." Shall such a sacrifice as this, extending even to life itself, be cheerfully made ; and shall we not find as many Christians in every town willing to sacrifice the third, or fourth, or at least the tenth part of their property for the good of mankind, and the regeneration of society. The offerings, in ancient times, for the service of God, far exceeded any thing that has yet been attempted under the Christian economy. The gold and silver alone, offered for the rearing of the tabernacle, amounted to upwards of 300,000l. of the present value of British money, besides the brass, the shittim wood, the linen, the embroidered curtains, the onyx stones and jewels, and the regular *tithe* which every Israelite annually paid of all they possessed. When the temple was about to be erected, David, along with his princes, and captains, contributed no less than 108,000 talents of gold, and 1,017,000 talents of silver, which amounted to more than 900 millions of pounds sterling ; and the expense of the sacrifices offered on the occasion amounted to several hundred thousand pounds."—Chron. xxii. 14, xxix. 3—9. These offerings were a tribute of gratitude to God, the original bestower of every enjoyment ; and hence, David, when he blessed the Lord before all the congregation, declared, "All things came of thee, and *of thine own have we given thee.* All this store we have prepared to build an house for thy holy name, cometh of thee, and *is all thine own.*" The tithes, or tenth of their income, were designed as an acknowledgment that they had received their estates from his free gift, and held them by no other tenure but his bounty. They were a kind of *quit-rent* annually paid to the Great Proprietor of the soil, for the maintenance of his worship, and the instruction of the people. And why should not the estates of Christians be viewed in the same light.

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I am disposed to indulge the hope, that, ere long, thousands of Christians in different parts of the church, will come cheerfully forward and consecrate, not merely a tenth, but, in many instances, one-half,* of their substance, for carrying forward the designs of Providence for the reformation of the world. Such offerings are nothing more than what is requisite for accomplishing this grand object ;

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* The Gospel never says a word either about tenths or halves, it invariably requires all, and never gives the slightest hint that God will be satisfied with less. The man that loves God with all his heart, and his neighbours as himself, will employ his all for God, in doing good to mankind.—Editors.

and when such a spirit of liberality becomes general in the Christian church, we may confidently expect that the happy era is fast approaching, when the light of divine truth shall shed its radiance on every land —when "the glory of Jehovah shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together—when the wilderness and the solitary place shall be made glad, and when righteousness and praise shall spring forth before all nations."—*Dick on the Moral Improvement of Mankind.*

BRIEF NOTICE OF PUBLICATIONS, RECENTLY ISSUED BY J. H. ROBINSON AND T. ALLIN.

Two Pamphlets, one written by J. H. Robinson, and the other by T. Allin, having just come into circulation, in vindication of the Conference and in opposition to the statements made by J. Barker in his account of his trial; it may be proper to say, that both of them will be duly noticed at an early period, and their character exposed. For the present, we shall say but little. We may, however observe, that to parties who are implicated in bringing the connexion to its present unhappy and divided state, it may be exceedingly desirable to lead the minds of the people *from* the great questions at issue, and to employ them in *reading letters* respecting the good temper and good conduct of Conference.—From them it appears, that every thing has so far been done well—that no imprudent step has been taken either by the Conference or by the corresponding member of the annual committee—that no mischief in the Connexion is attributable to any act or acts of the governing authorities,—that the entire fault lies on the other side, and on the other side alone. That, had the persons constituting the Conference been specially inspired by an unerring spirit, and possessed the dispositions of angels, they could not have understood their duty better than they did understand it; nor have acted more in conformity with the spirit of Jesus Christ. On the other hand, those of another opinion are spoken of as acting under the influence of the very worst principles which can be found in connection with the human heart. This is all natural, and no more than might reasonably be expected;—still, it is a pity but the writers of these pamphlets had found something else to do; because, according to statements made in Conference, the Connexion is now delivered from the great hindrance to its prosperity, and, consequently, nothing remains to be done but to go on and prosper! But, T. Allin and J. H. Robinson ought not to be so determined to throw dust in the eyes of the people, for the purpose of keeping them in the dark respecting matters with which they are especially concerned.

Much is said about the patience and forbearance of Conference, and there has evidently been a fishing for names to support the character of Conference in this respect.—Here, reader, is evidence of the excellent spirit of the Conference! Look at it. A number of persons, all of whom (with one exception,) *voted the same way*, and are, therefore, implicated in the whole transaction from first to last, have been engaged in writing letters to each other, respecting the fine-spirited way in which they have mutually behaved themselves and done their work! 'Tis true, they do not sound their trumpets directly for themselves, but what is nearly the same, they sound them for one another. How could they do otherwise, if they must speak at all? It is not likely they were going to condemn themselves—it is ridiculous to suppose any one was going to say, "I admit that some of the proceedings of the Conference were very unfair and un-christian; but, notwithstanding this, I sanctioned them by my vote." Such an admission as this could not be expected. T. Allin must have been aware of this—he must have known that no man was going to give public evidence against himself, and hence the evidence of the parties whose names T. A. has inserted, amounts to nothing at all.

Thomas Allin seems particularly fond of making use of David Oldham's testimony of the good-spirit and conduct of the Conference. As he brings him forward as such an indisputable authority in this case, is he willing to give equal credit to any testimony of D. Oldham's, respecting himself, or the suspicious power, which, for some time, has been seen rising up in the Connexion?

There are some who think also, that it might not be amiss for friend Oldham to explain himself; as in their opinion, he ought publicly to recant what he has said respecting the power which certain parties possess in the Connexion, before he begins to say there is no such power in existence.

From what is said, it would be thought that J. Barker was as far from the truth as the east from the west, in stating that the Conference clamoured him down, &c.; this, however, was literally done on the Monday afternoon. The spirit and proceedings of that afternoon will not soon be forgotten; the violence and clamour then witnessed, were a disgrace to any body of men utterly destitute of christianity. Many who did not hold with Joseph Barker, deprecated the manner in which some of the leaders of the Conference conducted themselves; and one of them, (George Goodall,) came forward on the platform and warned the Conference in the most solemn manner, of the consequences of the extreme and summary course which they appeared determined to pursue. The spirit and conduct of that afternoon shown towards J. Barker, when T. Sturges' case was under consideration, was well understood to be intended to make an impression, and to tell a tale, when the more important case of J. Barker should come on;—and that it did make the impression intended, it is impossible, without a total disregard to truth, to deny. In short, at the time to which we allude, a worse feeling could not have shown itself; and that very feeling convinced many, that the fate of Joseph Barker was already fixed; and subsequently, during the time that he was making his defence, several who had taken an active part against him were seen *sneering* at him, and appeared as if they were at a loss to show how much they despised and hated him. In what he had to say he was several times interrupted, while on the other hand, the speakers against him were receiving from the major part of the Conference constant expressions of approbation, and the more severe and condemnatory their language was, the greater were the manifestations of satisfaction. Neither T. Allin nor others seemed to know what spirit they were of; from first to last, T. Allin, especially, showed himself to be in possession of feelings which totally unfitted him either for thinking, or speaking, or acting, in a manner becoming the station he holds in the Connexion, and happy would it have been for the community, if his friends could have advised him to have retired from the business altogether. But he appeared in Conference as the grand instigator of measures, and pusher on to lengths, at which others were disposed to pause and look, before they ventured. T. Allin evidently thinks that it is time to try to whitewash himself and the Conference, and to get as many hands as possible set to the work; but it is all in vain; all the whitewashing in the world will never hide the stains which his spirit and conduct, as well as that of others, have affixed to its character; and if he can think it right to spend his time in justifying the temper of such a Conference; and if he means to say that the spirit of that Conference was as good as the spirit by which Conferences are animated in general, then, happy is the man who keeps at a distance from a Conference, from his cradle to his grave!

But it is proper the public should distinctly understand that the question they have to decide upon is not so much whether Joseph Barker was right or wrong or whether the Conference was patient or impatient, while attending to his case; but it is whether, supposing J. Barker to be as guilty as he is represented to be, he has been dealt with in a fair, honourable, and constitutional manner. We say, that he has not; that all the bad features in the trial of Alexander Kilham are visible in the trial of Joseph Barker, and that we have only to trace all the transactions of the annual committee relative to this case, and connect these transactions with the proceedings and decisions of the Conference, in order to see that the great principles held and insisted on by the founder of the New Connexion have been trampled upon, and that free representation and true liberty in the New Connexion is little more than a mockery.

This is the great matter of complaint;—we repeat it—it is not merely whether or not Joseph Barker could, with propriety, have been retained in the Connexion; but whether he has been expelled fairly, and in harmony with the great leading principles of the body! This is the question of questions, and this question deeply concerns every member of the Methodist new connexion. It may be stated at once, that the boasted representation of the New Connexion in the Conference is not a guarantee of liberty; it is little more than a cover to a power, equally as destructive to liberty, as any power which has ever been complained of in the Wesleyan Body. A very few individuals, perhaps amounting from six to twelve, constitute, so far as power is concerned, both the *Conference* and the *Connexion*, and whoever may suppose that the principles of the Connexion secure to them a liberty *apart* from the *will* of these individuals, they are perfectly mistaken. The mere fact of the annual committee and the Conference being composed of an equal number of preachers and laymen proves nothing; such an arrangement is only good so far as it, not professedly, but *actually*, protects that liberty, which the founders of the Connexion declared it to be the right of every christian to possess. Without such protection, what is lay representation worth? and in what does the New Connexion differ from other arbitrary bodies, except it be that the power to govern, although as absolute, is in fewer hands?—Let the people ponder these questions, and let these questions be examined in connection with what has taken place within the last few months, and they will be able to understand their true position in the Connexion. It will not do for T. Allin to assume the authority of Jabez Bunting. The Connexion is not prepared to acknowledge him as an arbitrary ruler, or a universal Bishop; he has made too many professions in favour of religious liberty for that; and, therefore, the sooner he retires from his present office the better,—it is impossible that he can retain it without injuring the Connexion. This is not the opinion of a few only, who at present may be the objects of his displeasure, but it is the opinion of his *own friends*, who, during his recent campaign, have stood by him; it is *their opinion*, as well as ours, that the community will not—cannot rally, until T. Allin be removed from the responsible situation which he has, for a long period, occupied in the Connexion.

Let us briefly review the recent proceedings of the ruling party in the Connexion of which T. Allin is the leader. We may begin with the Manchester meeting:—This meeting was called in consequence of certain reports having reached the corresponding member, respecting the peculiar views of Joseph Barker upon the subject of baptism, the book-room, and the beneficent fund. Now if the *only* object of that meeting had been to protect these institutions, and to obtain a distinct understanding among each other that they should be protected, the meeting might have been a constitutional one for any thing we know. With that subject, however, we have nothing to do; no one need find fault with the Manchester meeting for protecting the Institutions of the Connexion. It is *not* these Institutions which is the matter of enquiry, but the trial of Joseph Barker. We ask, therefore, was that trial a fair and impartial one? Was it as fair and impartial a trial as is secured in a civil court to the greatest criminal that exists within these realms? Let T. Allin answer *that* question, and let him answer it satisfactorily, and he will render a far greater service to the Connexion than by fishing up and down for names to support his tottering authority. One requisite to a fair trial is, that the case of the criminal is kept perfectly free from from all influences arising from *predetermination;* for if persons possessing high offices which give them immense influence, *decide* against a man *before* that man is tried and fairly heard in his own defence; and if these persons, moreover, use their official influence for the punishment of that man, *previous* to his trial, in the name of common sense we ask, what sort of trial must he have? Are we, after all this, to believe the story, that his trial was as free and unprejudiced as though such influence had never been operating, and as though such predeterminations had never been formed! Who that is sane can admit the truth of such declarations for a moment? And yet such are the declarations made respecting the trial of Joseph Barker. It is said, nothing *previously* done had the *least* unfavourable influence upon his trial in the Conference; and yet, in the face of all this, we see the *same parties* who took the most active and influential part in the *Conference*, sitting in a meeting at *Manchester*, and whatever else they did at that meeting, they so far tried J. Barker in his absence, and in the absence of his friends, as to come to the *unanimous conclusion* that, unless J. Barker thought proper to withdraw from the Connexion, it would be the duty of the Conference to "*remove him.*" Let this fact not be forgotten,—let it ever be kept in mind, that this conclusion to *expel* J. Barker was come to at the Manchester meeting, which was held *some weeks previous* to the Conference. Here then we have an important, and to the liberties of the Connexion an awful fact, viz., that all the great officials of the Connexion meet together at Manchester, and so far try Joseph Barker, as to come to a unanimous conclusion, that he must be expelled from the Connexion,—this is done weeks before Conference meets. The meeting at Manchester dissolves, but dissolves only, that each individual composing it, may act upon the conclusion to which they had mutually come. From that time, —the time at which they agree upon the fate of J. Barker, their influence is seen at work, in making that fate *secure*. And when the Conference arrives, the *same persons*, with their predeterminations, are found to be the very persons, above all others, engaged in consummating that, on which they had previously, unanimously determined. With facts like these before us, who can believe that the case of Joseph Barker, when brought before the Conference, was entirely unaffected by any thing which had been previously done? Such a statement only makes bad worse, because there is neither truth nor probability in it.

Let us now look at another matter. T. Allin, in conjunction with the annual committee, *previous* to the meeting of Conference, sends circulars, containing certain resolutions bearing upon the case of Joseph Barker, into every circuit in the Connexion except those where J. B.'s friends were likely to form the majority. This proceeding also has been defended, and that defence says more for the hopeless state of the Connexion than any thing which may be said in the way of condemnation; and for this reason,—it shows that the parties in power have not only taken a course inimical to the interests of the Connexion, but that they are *confirmed* in that course—they have not only lost all sense as to its impropriety, but are prepared to stand by it, and defend it to the very last. For what purpose, it may be enquired, were the circulars designed, unless it was to let the circuits know what the authorities intended to do with Joseph Barker at the Conference, and to dictate to them also, as to what they ought in duty to do? The annual committee had no reason to suspect that any of the circuits were departing, or likely to depart, from the ordinances and institutions of the Connexion; this could never be supposed—the committee did not suppose it. Why, then, did the corresponding member of that committee send to the circuits the circulars to which we have referred? Why not leave the circuits alone to manage their own work as usual? Why should the influence of the annual committee be sent forth in the form of resolutions to fetter and interfere with the judgments of the people? That resolutions from such a quarter would exert a considerable influence upon the circuits, there cannot be a question; that the circulars were understood by the circuits generally, as being *intended* to exert such an influence is also certain; we, therefore, have only to ascertain whether or not that influence was unfavourable to Joseph Barker, and whether it was not the cause of resolutions being passed in various parts of the Connexion detrimental to him? If this was the case, how could the circuits who had passed such resolutions under the authority and by the dictation of the annual committee—how could they, with propriety, come into Conference and vote upon the trial of a man against whom they had, by formal resolutions to a greater or lesser extent, previously pledged themselves? How could they do this with clean hands or unprejudiced hearts? How could they, in the very nature of things, while sitting in judgment upon J. Barker, think and feel and act as impartially and freely, as though they had never previously and virtually decided, or passed resolutions against him? To say that under such circumstances a man could have a fair trial, is to say that which every one who possesses any knowledge of mankind, will find it next to impossible to believe; and were the trials of persons for civil offences in our common courts of law to bear any thing like an analogy to the trial of Joseph Barker—were their trials to be anticipated and prejudiced by the official parties, who had afterwards to decide their case, in the manner his was anticipated and prejudiced, the people of England would not submit to such a mockery of justice for a day, and reformation or revolution would be the immediate consequence of such a state of things. And this is not all. Admitting, for a moment, that the circulation of the Hanley and Manchester resolutions was, so far as the case of J. Barker is concerned, perfectly harmless, it may be asked, was it the *wish and intention* of the annual committee that they should be so? Was it not *desired* nor *designed* by them that these circulars should influence the decisions of the then approaching Conference at all in reference to that case? This is a question which deserves consideration, because the true character of the action of an individual is determined, not so much by the extent of injury that action may inflict upon another, as by the *disposition and motive* of the individual from which the action proceeded. A man may fully intend to murder another, and make those arrangements which appear to him to be best calculated to carry his intentions into effect, but after all, Providence may defeat his designs; but is the man less a murderer in character, or is he in anywise less guilty than he would have been if Providence had not frustrated his murderous purposes? The answer is plain. And it is on the self-same principle we must judge of the annual committee, in sending forth the circulars above-named into the circuits of the connexion. To suppose these circulars left the circuits as free to think and act as they found them, is to suppose an impossibility; but, even supposing that it makes no matter, it still leaves the designs of T. Allin and others exactly the same as if their designs had been fully accomplished; and as to what their designs *were* in issuing these circulars, there cannot be two opinions. So glaringly has the corresponding member and his associates committed themselves in the circular affair, that many of the decided opponents of J. Barker acknowledge that that part of their conduct is not to be justified. To justify it is impossible; and while the principal official man in the Connexion persists in defending it, the character and liberty of no minister in the connexion can be considered as safe.

We now come to the Conference; and here we find the very persons possessing the principal official power in the Connexion—the persons who had decided against J. Barker, at the Manchester meeting, and who had subsequently sent circulars into the Connexion for the purpose of inducing the circuits, in an indirect manner, to come to a similar decision. We see these self same persons for the *third* time, taking a leading part against J. Barker in the Halifax Conference. We see them not only stating the case, but also *specially pleading* that case in the most disingenuous manner--in a manner the best adapted to prejudice the Conference against the character of Joseph Barker. They not only do this, but they (the same individuals) proceed to move and second and support resolutions for his expulsion; and, finally, to crown all, and to complete what they have begun, and so far carried on, they are seen holding up their hands against him, and thus giving the finishing stroke to a work which, when properly examined, and fully understood from beginning to end, will, no doubt, be looked upon as an *awful* work, when viewed in connexion with the interests of true religion, and as a *fatal* work when considered in relation to the prosperity of the Methodist New Connexion. In this ecclesiastical tragedy—in the cutting off of Joseph Barker from the Christian Ministry, we have the same persons acting the part of accusers, witnesses, counsel, jury, and judges! Such is the recent history of the far-famed Methodist New Connection; such are the alarming events to which we have briefly alluded, and on account of which thousands of the people scarcely know what to do. A "blow" has certainly been struck, and it no longer remains to be seen whether that "blow" has settled or shaken the Connexion. A few more such blows will not only shake, but shatters a community which has for nearly half a century boasted of taking the lead of all others in defence of religious liberty, and of being above all others placed upon principles which would necessarily prevent the existence of every description of corruption.

We have now named a few things which deserve notice, and from which the public must not allow their attention to be diverted. It is, in the abstract, a very little matter with them whether Joseph Barker be a good man or a bad man; for whether he be good or bad, he does not stand *alone*, nor will his private character make the public proceedings of T. Allin towards him one whit the better; because, admitting him to be the subject of the greatest criminalty, ought he not still to have been tried in a *fair* and *constitutional* way—in such a way that the friends of the Connexion might have seen, that while its principles afforded every facility for the detection and punishment of the guilty, they at the same time were *equally efficient* in protecting the character and privileges of the innocent? To these points, we also request the attention of T. Allin himself. They want explaining and illustrating in *connection with the course he has been taking for a considerable time, but more especially for these last few months.* An explanation of these subjects, apart from the personalities of the most bitter and inveterate discription in which he has of late so freely indulged, is required at his hands. We wish him to set himself *calmly* and *dispassionately* to the work, and if he finds himself unable thus to go into these matters, which are in reality the only ones of *vital importance*, we hope he will not deceive himself by supposing that he can raise himself, or the cause he is employed to promote, either by attempting the ruin of J. Barker's character, or the character of any other man.

What T. Allin says, respecting the persons whose testimony he brings forward in his defence, having been formerly the friends of J. Barker, may serve to deceive the unwary, and no doubt will do so to a certain extent,—but we all know, that to have friends in *prosperity* is one thing, and to have friends in *adversity* is another. Kilham had *plenty of such friends as these*—friends who *before* his expulsion professed every thing which could be desired, but *after* his expulsion, when they were similarly applied to, could express their doubts and fears respecting Kilham's piety, and the like, and make use of the very same language in substance as is used by friends Oldham, Fowler, Withinshaw, &c., respecting Joseph Barker; so that such testimony as T. Allin furnishes, is no *new* thing;—in short, the whole scene is only the *old thing acted over again*, and surely no one can think that T. Allin has shown either very very much judgment, or very much taste in imitating, so exactly, the expedients which were adopted by the leading parties of the Wesleyan Body, to screen the character of their Conference from public reprobation, after that Conference had expelled Alexander Kilham for advocating the right of private judgment, and the religious privileges of the people in general.

Again, if in Kilham's case a Conference of *two hundred* acted wrong, may not a Conference of only "*seventy*" do the same? To talk of the mere circumstance of *numbers* being a sufficient guarantee that all shall be done righteously in a Conference; and that, when it is notorious that the greatest of numbers have frequently acted *unrighteously*, is to talk like one who is neither human himself, nor knows any thing at all of the properties of human nature. —Arguments of such a character, however, always carry with them their own refutation, and consequently need no refuting. We therefore leave the matter for the present, and shall be very glad if T. Allin does not, by another publication similar to his last, oblige us to return to it again.

As the result of the foregoing observations there is one question which suggests itself to the mind,—it is this. If, in dealing with the case of Joseph Barker, T. Allin has done all right, and if the Annual Committee and the Conference have also done perfectly right, in giving their concurrence and support to his proceedings, wherein did the Wesleyans do wrong in the manner in which they conducted the trial of A. Kilham, which terminated in his expulsion? This is a question which many find it very difficult to answer; nor can it perhaps be answered fully, and to satisfaction by any one, save the individual who has said so much in condemnation of the Wesleyans, and who, notwithstanding this, has of late been closely imitating them in some of the most corrupt and arbitrary parts of their conduct. If T. Allin and others have done nothing wrong in the trial of J. Barker, what was there in the Conference which expelled A. Kilham, to justify a division in the Wesleyan body, which will not justify a division in the Methodist New Connexion? It appears to be a matter of a secondary kind whether the cases of A. Kilham and J. Barker were conducted by all preachers, or all laymen, or by an equal mixture of both; it is not the *parties*, but the proceedings of the parties, which merit our attention, and these proceedings, in each case, possess such a *striking similarity*, that it appears impossible either to justify or condemn the one, without at the same time justifying or condemning the other.

Of J. H. Robinson's letter to J. Barker we need say nothing—its own manifestly low, extreme, and sarcastic character will of itself be to all, a sufficient *caution* as to how, and with what limitations it ought to be received. It can do *no harm*, except it be to the party for whose *good* it was intended. By such a letter that party may be *pleased*, but they cannot be *benefitted*. With a bitter, violent, sectarian feeling, the religious public in general never was, and it is to be hoped never will, be found to sympathise. Any one of ordinary discernment may see that J. H. Robinson has written more for the sake of the Conference than for the sake of the truth, as almost every sentence he has penned is capable of the most perfect refutation, and will in another form be very shortly refuted.

We beg in connection with this subject, to refer our readers to an advertisement on the cover of this number, of a new publication, by W. Trotter.

INVESTIGATION COMMENCED.

"*Is the Religion of Jesus Christ indeed destined to become the Religion of the World?*"

This question, the first of the series we have proposed to examine, leads us to ground which has been very frequently traversed already; and an affirmative answer is now, generally, said to be the true one.

We say such an answer is *said to be* the true one, not in order to insinuate that it is not so, but to make a distinction between mere verbal assent, and positive conviction. For we are apprehensive that in regard to this particular, as well as to many others, the tongue very frequently affirms what the heart denies. Had we reason to believe that a sincere, spirit-stirring expectation of the subjugation of the world to the faith of Christ, (and all *sincere* expectation of such an event must be spirit-stirring) was as generally prevalent as is the profession of that expectation, we should have been inclined to pass by our present question, and take for granted the affirmative of it. But we fear the one is by no means so prevalent as the other. Notwithstanding our frequent repetition of those prophecies which bear upon the subject, there must be a great deal of practical scepticism on the subject amongst us. It is impossible to conceive that the lives of many Christians would be so inconsistent with such an exalted expectation, as they must be allowed now to be, if the expectation were really cherished in each heart. For one to be *convinced* of the approach, and especially of the speedy approach, of a season when righteousness and peace and joy shall fill every heart, and influence every action of the human family; and still to live as many who profess this conviction do live, is a case that cannot be imagined. And even this verbal profession is not steadily adhered to. When, indeed, the destiny of the world's population is viewed through the medium of *prophecy*, an anticipation of a coming and transcendently glorious change is generally excited; but when the future is contemplated in connexion with the experience of the past, and the moral aspect and state of the present,—then frequently our faith is shaken, and we deny our previous testimony. Then we exclaim, "Surely this cannot be?" "The world is too bad to be so greatly mended,"—"Human nature will be human nature still."

It is therefore necessary to reconsider the whole matter. We must tarry awhile, in contemplation of the "things which shall be hereafter." We must appeal "to the law and to the testimony." We must allow the dazzling light of inspiration to disperse our doubts, and fill our hearts with enlightened and unwavering confidence. Before we proceed to parts of our inquiry which will be painful, and perhaps offensive to "flesh and blood," it will be beneficial to linger for a few moments: to listen to "glad tidings of great joy," and to gaze upon "the glory which should follow" the sufferings of Christ. "This is for our health." We shall not be wearied by exercise like this—we shall renew our strength. Whilst we are musing the fire shall burn, and, if we do not hinder it, it shall consume our apathy, and constrain us to exclaim in all sincerity,

"Oh that all might catch the flame,
All partake the glorious bliss!"

And now, if your heart be with ours, we are mutually anxious to reperuse and re-consider those portions of Holy Scripture which have reference to the progress of Christianity among the sinful, guilty, wretched, dying population of our world. We shall, therefore, at once present a few of them to your notice.

What then do the Scriptures teach as to the extent of the influence which the religion of Jesus Christ shall exert upon the nations of the earth? Is this religion *indeed* destined to become the religion of the world.

Our task, though but commenced, is almost done. We must allow the testimony of prophets, and apostles, and of THE LORD himself, to fill most of our remaining space. Our own remarks shall be as brief as possible.

1. The very first allusion to a Saviour indicates, and not indistinctly, the success of his mission.

"I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; *it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.*" Gen. iii. 15.

Now, to bruise the *head* implies a greater achievement than to bruise the *heel*. The good to be achieved by the seed of the woman is therefore more extensive than the evil wrought by the serpent. If then the evil hitherto has been so prevalent, what may we not expect as to the future prevalence of the good?

2. The inference we have deduced from the promise just noticed is confirmed in a most remarkable way, by the covenant made soon afterwards with Abraham.

"In thy seed shall all the families (or nations) of the earth be blessed." Gen. xii. 3.

This cheering promise of blessing to all nations, occurs in the Bible no less than seven times. It was made twice to Abraham, once to Isaac, and once to Jacob. It is quoted by the Almighty himself, by St. Peter, and by St. Paul. Both the Apostles interpret it as referring to Christianity. The former explains the term *blessed*, "Unto you first, God having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to *bless you, in turning every one of you from his iniquities.*" Here then we tread on firm ground. All the nations of the earth are to be *blessed*, in the seed of Abraham, by being "turned away from their iniquities." And St. Paul explains this promised blessing of all nations as signifying the "justification of the heathen through faith." Nothing can be more decisive as to the conversion of all nations, than these inspired explanations.

3. The Book of Psalms affords much evidence on this question. At the very opening, we have the following passage.

"The Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." Ps. ii. 8—9.

And this subjugation of the heathen, thus absolutely promised, is, in the subsequent verses of the Psalm, made a reason for cheerful submission to the Messiah. "Be wise now THEREFORE, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the son, lest he be angry, and ye perish by the way." A plain intimation this, that by gentle means, or when such fail, by severe means, all the kingdoms of the earth shall become the kingdoms of our God, and of his Christ.

4. In the 110th Psalm, this universal conquest is again declared.

"The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion; rule thou in the midst of thine enemies. Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." Ps. cx. 1—2.

5. And the 72nd Psalm, known as the "Psalm for Solomon," appears to be "in type and in truth," as the heading expresses it, but an enlarged view of the same glorious event. We present it, however, only as an *apparent* evidence, for it does not appear to us that any absolute and positive proof of its application to the Messiah, can be found. And we seek truth only: not the maintenance of a preconceived opinion. We give the portions of the Psalm which are most pertinent to our question.

"Give the king thy judgments, O God, and thy righteousness unto the King's son. * * *

"In his days shall the righteous flourish; and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth. He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth.

* * *

"Yea, all kings shall fall down before him, all nations shall serve him. For he shall deliver the needy when he crieth; the poor also, and him that hath no helpers. He shall spare the poor and needy, and shall save the souls of the needy. He shall redeem their souls from deceit and violence: and precious shall their blood be in his sight. * * *

"His name shall endure for ever; his name shall be continued so long as the sun: and men shall be blessed in him; all nations shall call him blessed. Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things, and blessed be his glorious name for ever; and let the whole earth be filled with his glory; Amen, and Amen." Ps. lxxii.

What a prophecy is this! Of what matchless sublimity is the language! And how great are the things predicted! Surely it is of "Jesus, the Son of David," according to the promise, and not of, *(or not merely of,)* Solomon, that the Prophet here speaks. It is hard to conceive that such expressions as "men shall be blessed in him; all nations shall call him blessed," can be spoken of any other but "the desire of all nations" himself. Our inference from these remarks, is this,—it is as difficult to conceive that the Psalm predicts anything but the subjugation of the world to Christ, as it is to conceive that it has no reference to Christ at all.

6. But evidence now opens upon us so full and explicit as, we think, will place the matter beyond doubt. The "evangelical Prophet," as might be anticipated, speaks with his accustomed clearness of expression. Very early in the book we have the following passage:

"It shall come to pass in the last days that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us his ways, and we will walk in his paths, for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem, and he shall judge among the nations, and rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plough shares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." Is. ii. 2—4.

7. The following well known passage occurs but a few chapters afterwards.

"His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. *Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end.*" Is. ix. 6—7.

8. And but two chapters further,

"Righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins. The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed: their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice's den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." Is. xi. 5—9.

9. Our next, from the same Prophet, affords evidence that, we think, is indisputable.

"And in this mountain shall the Lord of Hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined. And he will *destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the vail that is spread over all nations.*" Is. xxv. 6—7.

Surely the removal "of the face of the covering," and of the "vail," from all nations and people indicates their conversion to the truth.

10. And again,

"Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God! Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain; and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and *all flesh shall see it together*, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." Is. xl. 3—5.

For brevity's sake, we pass an impressive passage in the 49th chapter, and come to a short, but, to our mind, an infinitely cheering sentence, in the 53rd.

"The pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. *He shall see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied.*" Is. l. 10—11.

The Redeemer shall be *satisfied* with the prosperity and success which shall attend his saving work! What will be the extent of that success? Who can imagine "the travail of his soul?" And who, then, can imagine the glorious result?

12. The 60th chapter of the same book is one comprehensive prophecy of the glory and extension of the church. We can only give two or three verses.

"The Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising. * * *

"The abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee. * * *

"The nation that will not serve thee shall perish, yea those nations shall be utterly wasted. * * *

"Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders. Thy people also shall be all righteous, they shall inherit the land for ever." Is. lx. 12—18.

In taking our leave of this book, from which we have been compelled to quote largely, we have merely to remark, that the numerous and explicit testimonies found therein, are in perfect harmony with its general character,—an especially *evangelical* prophecy.

13. Jeremiah, the next in order, shall now be heard.

"At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the LORD, and *all the nations* shall be gathered unto it, to the name of the LORD, to Jerusalem: *neither shall they walk any more after the imagination of their evil hearts.*"

No language can be more express than the concluding words of this verse.

14. God hath given us "line upon line:" prophecy after prophecy. Is it possible, that we are still unbelieving? Do we still *feel* as if the world was too bad? As if the prejudices and passions of men were too strongly inclined to evil, to allow us to hope for their conversion to holiness and love? Are we still disposed to allow *our experience* to set aside *God's prophecy?* Listen we, then, to succeeding prophets.

"There was given him (the Son of man) dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, *that all people, and nations, and languages should* serve him:

"I beheld and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them. Until the ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the most high, and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom.

"And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most high." Dan. vii.14, 21-2, and 27.

15. Joel, as it is well known, and as quoted by St. Peter, also affords us some evidence.

"And it shall come to pass afterwards, that I will pour out my spirit *upon all flesh.*" Joel ii. 28.

16. Zephaniah shall be our next witness.

"Therefore wait ye upon me, saith the Lord, until the day that I rise up to the prey: for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger: for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy. For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent." Zep. iii. 8.

17. We have not, even yet, heard the last.

"He shall speak peace to the heathen: and his dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth." Zech. ix, 10.

18. We have gone through the first great division of the Bible. We commenced with Genesis; we conclude with Malachi. He is not silent.

"From the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same, my name shall be great among the Gentiles; and *in every place incense shall be offered to my name,* and a pure offering, for my name shall be great among the heathen, saith the Lord of Hosts." Mal. i, 11.

We must now proceed to the New Testament. It will be perceived by the progressive numbers, attached to our quotations, and the remarks thereon, that we have already produced *eighteen* distinct prophecies bearing on our question, and we think *severally* supporting the answer we have proposed as the true one. We cannot, of course, judge with certainty of the impression which a review of this evidence will produce on other minds: but we must declare, our own mind is at perfect rest. And we can scarcely conceive it possible for any one to evade the force of such an accumulation of proof.

We must, however, glance through the New Testament, as well as the Old. What then is its testimony?

19. The very first announcement of a Saviour, as being actually born, gives us a glorious confirmation of previous prophecies.

"Behold, I bring you glad tidings of great joy, *which shall be to all people.*" Luke ii. 10.

And what is this "great joy" thus to "be" experienced by all people? What, but the reception of a Saviour, "which is Christ the Lord.?"

20. Come we now to hear Him speak, who "spake as never man spake."

"Whereunto shall I liken the kingdom of God? It is like a leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal *until the whole was leavened.*" Luke xiii. 20 and 21.

This style of teaching, on this point, is precisely such as might be looked for, when the *general* character of our Lord's teaching is taken into account. He taught by parables. But we think that the evident design of this parable is to show, that the Gospel of the kingdom of God shall increase until *the whole* moral world *be leavened.*

21. And for this, all the followers of Christ are commanded, by him, to pray.

"Thy kingdom come. Thy will *be done on earth as it is in heaven.*" Matt. vi. 10.

"Thy kingdom come; thy will be done, on earth, *as universally,*—not merely, as *perfectly* as it is in heaven," is apparently the sense of the petition. But we are certainly not commanded to pray for an event that cannot be realised: or that ought not to be *believingly* expected.

22. The Apostles also give us important testimony. St. Paul's is as follows.

"I would not brethren that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness, in part, hath happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved, as it is written, there shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob." Rom. xi, 25. and 26.

Here, the Apostle declares purposely the future conversion of the entire nation of the Jews, and incidentally, that of "the fulness of the Gentiles." And the meaning of the term *fulness,* as here used, may be gathered almost with certainty from a previous verse, where the "fulness" of *Israel* evidently means "all Israel." Here then is another declaration of the future conversion of the whole human race!

23. There is nothing more remarkable, in connexion with the question of the world's conversion, than the almost entire absence of every thing like evidence in Scripture of the negative. We are unable either to recollect, or find, a single passage which presents a real difficulty; and even *apparent* difficulties are exceedingly rare. The book of Revelation, to which we now, in conclusion, must appeal, removes these, as well as crowns, by its closing testimony, our series of quotations.

"And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit, and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the devil, and satan, and *bound him a thousand years.* And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, *that he*

> *should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled:* and after that he must be loosed a little season." Rev. xx. 1-3.

24. It is this event, we believe, that is referred to in the 11th chapter, as follows:—an event worthy of such a commemoration.

> "And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, *the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ;* and he shall reign for ever and ever."

Amen! Even so, Lord Jesus! "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven!" O, thou that hearest prayer! hear *this* prayer, that thou hast thyself inspired! "Why are the wheels of thy chariot so long in coming? Why tarry the wheels of thy chariot?"

Finally; does the Bible furnish any proof, or apparent proof, on the other side? We have already declared our conviction on this point. There is no *real*, and scarcely a shadow of *apparent* difficulty in connexion with the decision we come to. And the book of Revelation removes that passing cloud, that "shadow of a shade."

The case stands thus. The prophecies speak of the universal kingdom of Christ on earth, as an "everlasting kingdom," as one that "endureth for ever." And yet there are other passages which describe the world, *at its dissolution*, as being wicked, or wicked to a great extent. Such is Rev. vi. 16, where "the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men," are represented as "saying to the mountains and rocks fall on us, and hide us," &c. Now without a key to solve this, an apparent difficulty might have remained to damp our zeal, and quench our energy in working for the salvation of our world. BUT WE HAVE A KEY. Glory to God in the highest! We have a key from *him that openeth,* and no man closeth after him.

> "That he (Satan) should deceive the nations no more TILL the thousand years were finished. And *after that he must be loosed for a little season.*—And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth.—And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city, and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them. And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast, and the false prophet are. (These, the *Papal* and *Mahometan* powers, were destroyed from the earth *before* the "thousand years.") And they shall be tormented day and night for ever. And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead small and great stand before God." Rev. xx. 3, and 7-12.

Here is the wisdom, which reconciles and harmonizes dark sayings. The "thousand years" shall come; —an enduring, and in comparison with the "little season," an "everlasting" period. Yes. So *long* that the Messiah shall "see the fruits of the travail of his soul and be satisfied." Then once more "*must*" (perhaps because men universally no longer have pleasure in the truth) "the deceiver of the nations be loosed." But it shall be but for a *little season.* So soon as persecution commences, so soon as the deceived nations attack the camp of the saints, the fire from heaven descends, the devil is cast into the lake, a great white throne appears, and the dead, small and great, stand before God?

Christian brethren! We have resolved, and do now again most solemnly, in the sight of God, resolve, that henceforth this object, the salvation of the world, shall engross all our powers, and engage our utmost energies. Will you assist us? Will you also "come up to the help of the Lord"? We trust, —we *believe* you will. And we think this confidence is not unfounded. We know that many, many hundreds, perhaps thousands, of *hearts* are with us. Let us have your *hands*;—nay, we will not ask thus, let GOD have hearts and hands and all.

God is giving us the will, and he shall point out the way. Brethren, prepare for action! Put on the whole armour of light. The world shall be subjugated to our Master's peaceful sway? We shall soon find modes and means—methods of union and co-operation; and grace to act upon them shall be given, "according to our day."

Our next inquiry is now excited *Is the Christian system—the system of means and agencies developed in the New Testament for promoting Christianity, indeed efficient for the conversion* *of the world?* Pray for us brethren, until we shall attempt, in our next number, if the Lord will, to furnish a reply.

* * *

THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.
(CONCLUDED.)

ANOTHER striking peculiarity of the age in which we live, is its utilitarian character. The grand question by which principles and systems and institutions are all tried in the present day is, What good do they do? It avails but little to urge any consideration in defence of any principle, unless it can be shown that it is salutary in its influence, and beneficial in its results. A system may be ingeniously contrived, and closely connected together in its various parts; it may be of long standing, and supported by numerous admirers; but the question by which its merits are tested, by the plain practical men of the present day is this, Is it of any use? An institution may have stood for ages and its praises may be celebrated by numbers, who are more or less interested, from one motive and from another, in upholding it: but neither its age nor its celebrity can screen it from the application of the utilitarian test, Is it, or is it not serviceable to society?

That such is the prevailing character of the age, none will dispute, who are in any measure acquainted with the state of the public mind. Whether the particular subject under consideration be connected with science or literature, with politics or religion, the principle of utility is applied to it, and in proportion to the good accomplished, or the good proposed, are its claims considered worthy of regard. Such is the character of the age; and the spirit of the times must greatly alter, before any plan that does not propose as its object, the benefit of the community, can meet with a tolerably favourable reception from the public.

I am fully aware that this principle is susceptible of abuse: that what seems to be useful to an individual may be injurious to a community; that what is apparently beneficial to one community may be detrimental to others; and even that what is useful to an individual or a community in *one* respect, may in some others, more important perhaps, be deeply injurious. Thus what is regarded as useful to the body may injure the soul; and a measure that may greatly promote the temporal prosperity of a church or of a nation, may lower the tone of moral sentiment that prevails, and inflict a deep irreparable injury on its spiritual interests. But then in all these cases it is the semblance of usefulness that is mistaken for its reality; or else, some low, unworthy standard of utility is adopted, and great, and permanent, and general advantages, are sacrificed for those which are trifling, and temporary, and local. These are the perversions and abuses of the principle, and they cannot afford any substantial argument against its legitimate use.

Let but the principle be properly understood and wisely applied; let but selfish and party interests be merged in a supreme regard to the good of our whole race; let the good of the whole race be consulted in relation to eternity as well as to time; let the good of *all*, in *all* respects, be that which is aimed at; and then where can there be a safer or a better principle than the principle of utility? The Gospel itself is a system of utility. Its object is to do good, to do good to all, and to do good to all in every respect; and it is only in the hands of infidels, who, in attention to the body, lose sight of the soul; who, in their supreme regard to the things of time and sense, lose sight of eternity with its vast concerns; and who besides, in the pride of their hearts, exalt their own speculations above the revealed wisdom of God; it it is in their hands alone, that the principle of utility is to be regarded with dread. In the hands of Christian men, who take an enlarged and comprehensive view of things, it is an excellent test, whereby to distinguish the precious from the vile.

Let us not be afraid my friends of applying this test. Depend upon it, whatever may be the principles we hold, or the system to which we have attached ourselves, they are only worthy of our support, as far as they are calculated to promote the real interests of mankind. This is the light in which numbers regard them now, and this is the light in which we must learn to regard them ourselves.

Religion has been considered by many as something too abstract and shadowy to render much important service to society. And men have had too much occasion given them to represent it thus. Religion has been taught by some as consisting merely in the belief of a certain creed, between which and the real interests and improvement of the human family, there has been no very distinct or clear connexion. By others it has been understood to consist in the cultivation of an excited state of feeling, that has left its subjects perhaps as insensible to the sufferings, and as regardless of the claims of their fellow-creatures, as they were before. By others again religion has been supposed to consist in attendance on outward ceremonial observances; observances however, which have proved themselves, when alone, to be of but little service to society. Now all these are right as far as they go; but they do not go far enough. Religion does require us to seek the truth, and when we have found it, to embrace it and hold it fast. Religion does inspire us with feelings of satisfaction and delight; and those who fully submit themselves to its influence, are often enabled to rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Religion does dispose us to associate with our fellow-christians in the worship of God, and forbids us to forsake the assembling of ourselves together. But then besides all these, and above all these, religion consists in an inward principle of love to God, producing a deep, heartfelt sympathy with our suffering fellow-men, and a firm, fixed, prevalent determination to do what we can to promote their welfare. This, which is the grand distinction of Christianity, which is, in reality, its soul and substance, has been generally overlooked. A religion of ceremony and show, of pomp and parade, of bigotry and excitement, has been substituted for the pure, simple, lovely, and efficient religion of the Saviour. Religion has been made to consist in anything, or everything, but in love to God and love to man. Hence the disgrace into which it has fallen. Religion was designed by a beneficent Deity to operate as the universal friend of man. It was intended to break the fetters by which he has been held in bondage to sense, and sin, and custom, and his fellow-men. It was designed to illuminate his understanding, correct his judgment, purify his heart, strengthen his conscience, and elevate his whole intellectual and moral nature. Its object was to dry up the fountains of human misery, and to pour a full tide of felicity through all the nations of the earth. And it is able to do this. It contains in itself the seeds of every thing that is good and great and glorious. As far as it is understood, received, and practised, it actually transforms a man from a wretched, selfish slave of lust and sin, into a happy partaker of spiritual freedom himself, and an emancipator of the souls of his fellow-men. And let but the religion of Jesus Christ be generally received and reduced to practice, and we shall see that every thing that is hurtful to society will be done away; every thing that is useless will be consigned to the oblivion that it deserves; and the true, heavenly, Gospel principle of utility, will fill every land with plenty, every home with contentment, and every heart with joy.

Brethren let us look upon our holy religion in this point of light. Let us regard it as the benefactor of mankind. Let us explore its magazine of blessings. Let us acquaint ourselves with its benevolent principles, and drink into its devoted, loving spirit. Let us lay aside every thing in our own character and conduct, that is unfriendly to the highest interests of our race. Let us arm ourselves with truth and righteousness, and go forth to vanquish and overthrow every principle, and system, and usage, that is hostile to the well-being of society. Let us bring the principles of the Gospel to bear upon every thing which exalts itself as the foe of human happiness, and let us never cease our efforts till every foe is completely conquered, or converted into a friend. By using the Gospel to break every chain that enslaves, and to heal every malady that afflicts mankind; by using it to qualify every human being for, and to put every human being in possession of, that happiness for which we were designed by God, let us vindicate the character of religion; let us assert its claim to be regarded as heaven's richest gift to man; and let us show that he who would most efficiently carry out *the principle of utility*, must put forth all his energies, and call into requisition all his resources, to promote the final triumph and universal spread of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

The third great characteristic of the age in which we live appears to me, to be its reforming tendency. This is emphatically the age of reformation. The spirit of reform seems to pervade a great part of the community, and in almost every department to which our attention can be turned, does this discover itself. In politics, in criminal and civil law, in police, in the post-office, in commerce, and in fact, in almost every branch of the social economy, have reforms been effected or proposed. Neither have morals and religion been overlooked. Temperance societies, societies to promote the due observance of the Sabbath, societies for the suppression of licentiousness, and for the recovery of its victims; and a multitude besides that need not here be mentioned, have lately sprung into existence, and are conducting their various operations, with various degrees of vigour and success. There have been, and there are, the indications of a spirit, that still seems widely spreading,—a spirit determined to detect the evils that prevail; to explore the sources from whence they spring, and to apply the suitable remedies with all practicable dispatch.

The age has gone by, in which corruptions could be kept in secret; in which the curtain of concealment could be drawn over enormous abuses; and in which those who were interested in the support of corruptions and abuses, could fatten undisturbed on their unholy gains, or revel without restraint amid their unhallowed indulgences. Better principles have found access to people's minds: another leaven has been introduced into society. Those principles have not yet acquired unlimited and universal sway; this leaven has not yet impregnated the whole mass; but there is in the aspect of society at present, a pleasing guarantee, that the progress of reform shall not cease, till every thing that is really hostile to the interests of mankind shall be discovered and removed; and that then it shall proceed, till every good principle is fully developed,—till every wise and benevolent suggestion is completely carried out in practice,—till every system or institution that is friendly to man's real welfare is brought to the utmost possible perfection. These anticipations may be deemed sanguine by some, but still it appears to us that they are not without a sufficient foundation. Taking the present aspect of the times in connection with the predictions of Holy Writ, it seems highly probable that the purifying process has commenced, by which all that opposes the perfect freedom and holiness and felicity of men's minds is to be purged away. Happy is that man whose character and conduct in every respect can abide the test; happy is that community that has no tin or dross to lose!

This peculiarity of the times, their reforming tendency, is in perfect harmony with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The Gospel of Christ is the unyielding foe of everything that is wrong; it is the firm, constant friend of every thing that is right and just, and pure and true. Ushered into a world where every thing almost is wrong, its object is to reform and remodel all things. And the Gospel reforms every evil and abuse in the best possible way. The spirit of reform amongst ungodly men is often wild and inconsistent. It seeks the destruction of lesser evils, while the greatest are suffered to remain. It often aims at improper objects, and seeks the attainment of proper objects, by improper means. Not so the Gospel. It strikes at the root of all evil by seeking to reform individual character; its objects are always of the purest and noblest kind; and the means by which it seeks their accomplishment are as pure and noble as the objects themselves. It would never have us to "do evil that good may come." It teaches us that an object which cannot be accomplished without violence, deceit, or fraud, ought not to be accomplished at all.

It is impossible to read the scriptures attentively, and understand their requirements, and then contemplate the existing state of things amongst professors of christianity, without coming to the conclusion that there has been an awful departure from christian principles, among the churches of the Redeemer.—There is no need in the present article to specify the instances in which this departure seems to have taken place. That must be reserved for future numbers of the work. What remains to be done in the present article is this, to point out as far as possible the spirit that should be cherished, and the course that should be pursued, by the friends of christianity, under the solemn circumstances by which we are surrounded at the present day.

In the first place, let us keep our minds open to conviction. If the church be, at present, as pure and perfect as it is designed to be by Christ; if it is absolutely free from all evils and imperfections; if it be in reality, not only free from all evil, but filled with all that is good and excellent and glorious; then let us shut our ears against those who talk of reforms and improvements; let us sit down at rest, perfectly satisfied with what we have done. But if the reverse of all this be true;—if the church is at present in an imperfect, divided, and unhappy state;—if intolerance and bigotry, intemperance and pride, sensuality and covetousness, prevail to a melancholy extent in the church;—if the church is as much below the christian standard of purity and temperance, and liberality and zeal, as the church itself is above the world in all these respects;—if without a change, it is impossible for the church ever to be successful in spreading the light and blessed influences of gospel truth throughout the world; if this be the existing state of things, then let us not shut our eyes and ears against the truth, and harden our hearts against its influence; but let us regard that man as our friend, and the friend of Christ, and the friend of the human family, who discovers to us one imperfection in our spirit or behaviour, of the existence of which we were not apprized before; who discovers to us one pernicious notion, or one evil practice, that prevails amongst professing christians. Instead of regarding him as an enemy because he tells us the truth, let us love him as a friend, and treat him as a brother.

In the second place, let us lay aside everything in our tempers or proceedings which we discover to be wrong; and let us practically adopt every principle which is proved to be inculcated by the gospel. It is not only requisite that we should be willing to be convinced; we must also be willing to act on our convictions. Would to God that ignorance was the only cause of the evils that prevail! That cause might be soon and easily removed.

It is not in all cases because men are ignorant of their duty that they neglect it; nor is it because they are ignorant of the criminality of their ways that they still pursue them.—It is not for us to judge individual character; but we should be blind indeed, if we did not perceive that many know their duty and do it not; that many are thoroughly convinced of the evil of practices, which they still daily indulge. Let us not not thus act. If we bear the name of christian, let us act a christian part. If anything be involved in a profession of christianity it is this; an obligation to renounce whatever we discover to be wrong, and to attempt the performance of whatever we believe to be our duty. The man who regulates his conduct by any other principle than this, cannot be a christian. He may call himself a christian, and he may be so styled by others; but God pronounces otherwise now; and the day is coming when all intelligent beings, himself included, will be obliged to pronounce otherwise too. O friends, if we have any regard to the credit of the christian character; if we have any regard to the interests of the Redeemer's cause; if we have any regard to the welfare of our own undying spirits, let us act on principle. Let us rather die than do what we believe to be wrong, or neglect to do what we believe duty requires at our hands.

In the third place, we must not wait for information to be brought to us on these points; we must examine the Scriptures for ourselves, we must try our own character and conduct by their requirements, and we must make it the business of our life to seek the highest possible attainments in knowledge and in holiness. Let us not only be willing that others should discover our imperfections to us, but let us anxiously seek to discover them ourselves. The man who is always waiting to receive impressions from others, instead of exercising a self-determining, self-governing power, is never likely to make much proficiency in holiness; he is never likely to manifest any great strength of character. Efforts to discover and remove the evils which remain in our hearts and lives, are necessarily painful; but still they must be made, and the advantages that may be expected to result, will amply repay the suffering we endure. Depend upon it brethren, if we are usefully to fill the lot that heaven has assigned us in these days of inquiry, and excitement, and reform, we must labour to have our spirit and conduct fully conformed to the requirements of the Gospel. We must be living witnesses of its character and influence.

In the last place, we must not be satisfied with labouring for the improvement of our own character in knowledge and in holiness: we must also do what we can to reform and improve the character of others. It is not enough that we should learn; according to our ability we must teach also. It is not enough that we should receive the light and walk in it ourselves; we must labour for its diffusion through all ranks and conditions of mankind. Each in his sphere, must be a reformer. Some may have a larger, some may have a smaller sphere; but within that sphere each must do what he can to correct every false notion, to discountenance every evil practice, to foster every gracious principle, and to bring all beginnings of good to full perfection. A deep sense of the responsibility we sustain, must rest on the mind of each individual Christian; and impressed by a sense of the obligations under which God has laid us; with a single eye to his glory, and in humble reliance on his blessing, we must both singly and unitedly labour to raise the church out of the dust; to inspire her with a consciousness of the great designs that she is intended to accomplish; and to urge her by every high and holy consideration, to devote all her energies to the promotion of these designs. Nor must we rest here; we must set the example, and lead the way. Impressed with the conviction that the church has been instituted to convert the world, we must ourselves do all that in us lies, to help onward the world's salvation. We must preach, and pray, and visit from house to house, and familiarly converse with the ungodly, and kindly instruct, and warn, and invite, and persuade them. What we cannot do ourselves, we must assist others to do. We cannot write books perhaps, but we can circulate books that others write. We cannot engage ourselves as missionaries perhaps; but we can contribute of our property, to send others out as missionaries to the benighted, destitute parts of the earth. And what we *can do*, WE MUST DO. God calls; Jesus urges; the perishing millions of our race send a piteous cry for help; time is short; eternity is near; judgment hastens on; what we do, we must do quickly; and we must do it with all our might; and whatever we sow in time, we shall reap in eternity; and though amid our self-denying, devoted exertions, for the reformation of an imperfect church, and the salvation of a guilty, wretched world, we may sometimes have to "sow in tears," yet we shall doubtless "return rejoicing, bringing our sheaves with us." * *

MISREPRESENTATION CORRECTED.

[The following article is extracted from the *Tyne Mercury* of July 27th; and as the slander which it disproves has been circulated far and wide, we deem it proper to insert it here at full length.—Eds.]

To the Editor of the Tyne Mercury.

Respected Editor,—In a letter, signed "A Friend of Truth," in your paper of the 20th instant, it is stated that I was "convicted of falsehood" before the whole Conference. I find, from a number of letters which I have received from various places on this subject, that this charge—that I was convicted of a wilful lie before the Conference, and that I had nothing to say in my own defence—has been circulated by the Conference preachers, and their helpers, through a great part of the Connexion; that this, in fact, has been the worst thing that my enemies have been able to say of me, and that this statement has done more to perplex and stagger the minds of my friends than any thing else that my enemies have reported respecting me. Under those circumstances, I have been induced to give some public explanation of the matter, that all who really love the truth may be able rightly to understand it.

What, then, is the simple truth of this affair? It is as follows:—I had stated in Conference that at the time when Thomas Allin first wrote to me on the subject of baptism, I had not, in any single instance, refused to baptize a child: that, in fact, there had been no case, to the best of my recollection, in which any person had requested me to baptize a child, so that I could not have refused to baptize any. I made this statement to show that I had *not*, as some had said, grieved the minds of parents by the course which I had taken in reference to baptism. And what I said was strictly true. There was no instance, I believe, in which I had been requested to baptize a child, and had refused. How, then, was I convicted of a wilful lie?

Simply, thus:—After I had repeatedly made the preceding statement without any one contradicting me, the subject was referred to again by one of my opponents, just at the moment I was leaving Conference to go to an appointment near Mossley. I had already remained in Conference far beyond the usual time, and I was obliged to retire then, or run the risk of missing the conveyance. While I was on my way out of Conference, James Argue, an Irish missionary, and a member of Conference, rose and flatly contradicted my statement, and declared that I had refused to baptize a child in his own presence, in Hood Street Chapel, Newcastle on Tyne, when he was there attending the anniversary missionary services, and that when I refused to baptize the child, he baptized it himself. When James Argue said this, I was astonished, and almost stupified. I recollected James Argue being at Newcastle at the time referred to; I recollected that a child that was brought on that occasion was baptized by himself; and though I had no recollection of being requested to baptize the child myself, or of refusing to baptize it; though I was fully persuaded that I had *not* been requested to baptize it, and that I had *not* refused to comply with such a request, yet as I had no evidence to offer in opposition to James Argue's assertion, except a simple declaration of my belief that the statement was not correct, I left the matter there, and retired from Conference. This was on Saturday night. It was my intention to have called for some explanations on the subject on the following Monday morning; but that same evening I was expelled, and when I returned to Halifax on Monday morning, I was told that Conference had passed a resolution that I should not be allowed to go into Conference any more, so that no opportunity of asking or of giving any explanation on the subject was afforded me.

After I returned to Newcastle, I got to know whose child it was that James Argue had said I had refused to baptize, and I asked the father, Henry Elliot, of Gateshead, whether James Argue's statement on the subject was correct; and he told me it was *altogether false.* I then went to the chapel-keeper, Robert Courage, of Newcastle on Tyne, and asked him whether I had refused to baptize the child referred to; and he also declared that he believed the statement of James Argue to be *wholly false.* Now, here are the only two persons to whom, if I had refused to baptize the child, that refusal would have been given; and both these persons, the only two persons that can give evidence on the subject, confirm my statement, and prove the statement of James Argue to be false.

Such is the simple truth in this affair. Henry Elliot and Robert Courage are both in the neighbourhood, and are prepared to confirm the preceding statements. And yet the man (supposed to be a Conference agent) who can come forward and publish to the world that I was "convicted" in this affair "of falsehood," can call himself "A Friend of Truth."

I have nothing to say as to the other things stated by your correspondent except this, that they are, generally speaking, of a piece with what he says about my being convicted of wilful falsehood: I know that some of the other things which he says are wholly false, and I believe that to be the case with the others. However, if he will clear up what he has said about the baptism affair, I will allow him to be credited in what else he may choose to say on other matters.

With sincere wishes for the welfare of my accuser,

I am, your's respectfully,
JOSEPH BARKER.

7th Mo. 22, 1841.

We, the undersigned, can bear full and decisive testimony to the truth of the statements made by Joseph Barker in the above letter, as far as we are concerned in the matter. (Signed)

Robert Courage, Chapel-Keeper.
Henry Elliot, Father of the Child.

REVIEW.

A Word to the Members and Congregations of the Methodist New Connexion, touching the late Conference. By J. H. Robinson.

We notice this pamphlet principally for the sake of correcting one or two misstatements in it. On page 3rd, it is said that it was proved at Conference that it was J. Barker's opinion "that the Lord's Supper might be attended to or not, *according to our pleasure*:" and on page 7, J. Barker and W. Trotter are charged with claiming the liberty "*to do and teach as they please.*" Both these statements we believe to be altogether incorrect. Neither J. Barker nor W. Trotter have ever, either in word or writing, claimed the liberty of either doing or saying *what they please*, on any subject whatever. Both J. Barker and W. Trotter teach, that men have no right to consult their pleasure with respect either to what they shall do, or say, or believe. They teach, that men's inclinations are to be subjected in all things to the will of God, and that whether they eat or drink, or *whatever* they do, they are to do all *to the glory of God*. To represent them, therefore, as claiming a right to do or say what they *please*, is to bear false witness against them: it is to charge them with a crime which their whole souls abhor.

Perhaps J. H. Robinson means that J. Barker and W. Trotter claim the right to judge for themselves what God commands and teaches, instead of blindly submitting their souls in all things to the authority of Conference. But if he meant no more than *this*, he should have *said* no more, and J. Barker and W. Trotter would *then* have acknowledged the charge to be true. For J. Barker and W. Trotter *do* believe, that it is their *duty* to judge for themselves what is the will of God concerning them, and that when they find that the will of God and the will of Conference are at variance, it is their duty to obey God rather than man. If *this* be heresy and crime, then do they acknowledge that they have no objection to be heretics and criminals of the deepest die, and they hope that their heresy and their crime will be found to be utterly and for ever incorrigible.

We find nothing else of moment in the pamphlet, but what has been sufficiently explained or refuted in the "*Brief Report of Conference Proceedings,*" "*Both Sides of the Question,*" "*The Church and the Press,*" *&c.*

A Hearer.—The Rev. Mr. Erskine mentions a fact which may afford a very useful hint to every hearer of the Gospel. A person who had been to public worship, having returned home perhaps somewhat sooner than usual, was asked, by another member of the family who had not been there, "Is all done?" "No!" replied he, "all is said but all is not done!" How little is commonly done of all that is heard! "Blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it."

Bishop Bundle.—Queen Caroline once pressed Bishop Bundle to tell her of her faults. "If it so please your Majesty," said he, "I will tell you of one. Persons come from all parts of the kingdom to see your Majesty at Whitehall chapel. It is therefore to be lamented, that you talk to the king so much during divine service." "Thank you, my lord bishop," said the queen; "now tell me of another of my faults." "That I will do," said he, "with great readiness, at some future time, but first correct that which I have just mentioned."

NEWCASTLE: PRINTED BY J. BLACKWELL AND CO.

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Hermann [illegible]
Stations: 1. 2. 3 &c. –
"a wrong"
"it does no such thing"

Wm Armstrong.

THE
CHRISTIAN INVESTIGATOR,
AND
EVANGELICAL REFORMER;

For the Promotion of sound Religious Knowledge, and the Inculcation of Temperance and Peace, and of the whole Religion of Christ.

No. 3. AUGUST 21, 1841. Vol. 1.

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES.

If I were asked the reasons why I consider myself bound to search the Scriptures, and to make them my daily study, I should give the following as some of the reasons:—

1. The Scriptures are God's own book. This of itself seems sufficient to recommend the careful and diligent perusal of the Scriptures to every professor of religion. If I were to receive a letter from my father, I should not feel easy till I had read it through, and properly understood and digested every sentence. And I should think a child lacking in affection to his father, who could keep a letter from him in his possession, from week to week, and never give it a thorough perusal. And shall I be less respectful or affectionate towards my Father which is in heaven, than towards my father on earth? Much as I am indebted to my earthly father, I am infinitely more indebted to my Father which is in heaven. I owe him *all*. From him I receive "life, and breath, and all things." To neglect the great letter which *He* has sent me would be the greatest ingratitude: such disrepect to my Heavenly Father would be utterly inexcusable.

Besides, the fact that the Scriptures are from God, is of itself a proof that they are of great importance to our welfare, and that a regard to our own interest requires us carefully to peruse them. God is good; his goodness knows no bounds; and all that he does he does for the welfare of his creatures. When, therefore, he gave us the sacred Scriptures, he meant them for our good. And God is wise; his understanding is infinite; and all that he does is exactly adapted to answer the ends for which it is designed. The fact, therefore, that the Scriptures are the Book of God, is of itself proof sufficient that our interests are wrapped up in them, and that we cannot neglect them without running the risk of frustrating the high and benevolent designs of unbounded wisdom and love. A neglect of the Sacred Oracles would be both ingratitude towards my best friend, and a criminal disregard of my own best interests.

2. Another reason why I consider myself bound attentively and constantly to search the sacred Scriptures is, that it is enjoined on me by God himself as a duty. When God revealed his will to the Jews, he commanded them over and over again to be careful not to neglect or forget the things which he had taught them, but to have them in their hearts, to teach them diligently to their children, to speak of them when they rose up and when they sat down, to write them on the doors and on the posts of their houses, and to bind them as frontlets between their eyes. When the Redeemer came and revealed the will of his Father, he also cautioned people against disregarding his words, and repeatedly blamed the Jews for their ignorance of the Scriptures

which were then in existence. He directed the Jews, who questioned his Messiahship, to search the Scriptures; and he told some of the Sadducees, on another occasion, that they did err, not knowing the Scriptures and the power of God. We are exhorted by the Apostle Paul to be *men* in understanding,—to let the word of Christ dwell in us richly in all wisdom,—to abound not only in love, but in knowledge and all judgment,—to study, not only the *principles*, the beginnings, or the first lessons of Christian knowledge, but to go on to perfection. The Apostle Peter also exhorts us, as new-born babes, to desire the sincere milk of the word, that we may grow thereby; and again he urges us to "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." What God has revealed, he has made it our duty to study; and we cannot neglect those exhortations and commands without incurring guilt, and subjecting ourselves to serious danger.

3. Again, I consider myself further bound to apply myself to the diligent study of the sacred Scriptures, by the examples of the wisest and best of men. The best and wisest of men have always delighted to hold converse with God, and such of them as have had any portion of the Sacred Writings in their possession, have taken delight in reading and studying them. We have a remarkable instance of this in the case of David. He delighted in the law of the Lord, and meditated therein day and night. He prized God's testimonies above silver and gold; they were sweeter to him than honey, or the droppings of the honey-comb. They were the joy and the rejoicing of his heart, and he chose them as his heritage for ever. The Saviour was mighty in the Scriptures, and by his frequent and apt references to their teachings, vanquished both the devil, and those amongst men who took the devil's part. The Apostle Paul was a diligent student of the Scriptures: Timothy was taught them from his childhood, and he made them the subject of his study in riper years. And Wycliffe, and Luther, and Baxter, and Hooker, and Wesley, were all men who paid great respect to the Sacred Oracles, and made them the subject of their diligent and prayerful study. And what those noble ones did in this respect, I feel myself drawn to do. I would imitate their example, and emulate their worth and excellence.

4. Again, I consider myself bound to apply myself to the diligent and prayerful study of the sacred Scriptures from the fact, that they treat on matters which concern my highest and eternal interests, and are sent to give me instructions how to secure my everlasting welfare. The object for which the Scriptures were written was, "to make us wise unto salvation through faith in Christ." And they are well adapted to accomplish this blessed object. They tell us what we need to know, and they teach us what we ought to do. They place before us the character of God, the wonders of his Providence, the plan of redemption by Christ Jesus, and the glories and solemnities of the eternal state. They tell us of the blessings of salvation, and they make us acquainted with the terms on which those blessings may be obtained. They point out to us the great principles of duty, and teach us how to act in all the relationships of life. In one word, they teach us the way of peace; the way to true happiness both in the present life, and in the life to come. And I feel bound, out of respect to my own welfare, to treat the Scriptures with the greatest respect, and to make them my constant study. How ready people are to read any book that promises to give them instruction how to secure their earthly interests. If a book be published promising to teach people how to improve their health, how eagerly it is sought after, how readily it is purchased, and how attentively and anxiously it is read. What multitudes have been sold of certain works on medicine, and with what diligence have they been read. And if a work were published that would tell people how they might get better employment, or higher wages, or more profitable connexions in business, or that would point them out some short and certain way to wealth and greatness, what diligence they would give to get a sight of it, and how quickly and attentively would they

read it through. And yet the sacred Scriptures do more than all this. They do not teach us how we may secure continued health of body, but they teach us how we may secure health of soul, and how, at last, we may come to the enjoyment of immortality, both of body and soul, in the world to come. They do not teach us how we may all get more agreeable and profitable employments on earth, nor how we may secure wealth and earthly greatness; but they teach us how we may have all our toils and troubles turned to consolations, and how we may obtain those riches and those honours which shall endure for ever. And these are the only things of serious importance; they are the only things which can make us truly happy. We might have health of body, we might have money, and we might have fame; we might have a paradise planted around us; we might be made immortal, and the whole world might be turned to one vast garden of delights, and yet, without the religion of Christ, we should not be happy. Our souls would still be restless and unsatisfied; and all the riches and pleasures of the world would be but a mockery of our misery. But let a man enjoy religion, let him be put in possession of the blessings of which the Gospel speaks, and though he be as poor as Lazarus, he may be happy. The man that is well instructed in the religion of Christ, and whose soul is brought fully under its influence, will have a peace that passeth understanding, and a joy that is unspeakable and full of glory.

5. And then the instructions which the sacred Scriptures give on these subjects are so full, and presented in such fit and various forms, as to render them exactly adapted to man's wants. They teach us every thing that is calculated to make us good, and useful, and happy; and they teach us every thing in the most engaging and effectual way. They not only give plain statements on subjects of truth and duty; but they accompany those statements with abundance of proofs and illustrations. With respect to the character of God, they not only tell us what he is, but they present us with such records of his works, as make his glorious perfections almost visible. And so with respect to matters of duty: they not only tell us what we are to do, and what we are not to do; but they present us with such a variety of striking examples, as makes our duty almost absolutely palpable. We are not only commanded to be sober, and pure, and pious, and charitable; but we have sobriety, and purity, and piety, and charity plainly set before our eyes, in the examples of a number of God's people. In the example of Christ we have our duty set before us in all its fulness, accompanied with every thing that can render duty attractive. The Scriptures also tell us of the dangers to which we are exposed, and to make those dangers the more manifest, they give us examples of men who have fallen by them. In the case of Noah and Lot, we see the danger of allowing ourselves in the indulgence of things which tend to suspend the exercise of sober judgment: in the case of David and Soloman, we see the danger of a wandering or a wanton eye. In Abraham and Moses, in Eli and Sampson, in Josiah and Jehosaphat, in Peter and Judas, in John and Paul, the snares which are laid for us are quite uncovered, and we are both warned to be on our guard, and instructed how to proceed so as to avoid the danger.

The Scriptures are also every way adapted to render us useful. They are adapted to furnish us, if we study them as we ought, to every good work. They not only *require* us to be useful, but they furnish us, in many respects, with the *means* of usefulness. They furnish parents with the means of instructing their children, and of bringing them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; and they furnish the ministers of Christ with those stores of knowledge, from which they are enabled to supply the spiritual wants of his people. They are calculated, if properly read, to render us perfect in our examples, instructive and edifying in our conversation, powerful in prayer, and able to fill to advantage every situation in which we may be placed, whether in the church or in the world.

And they furnish us with consolation under troubles. Every man has afflictions in the present life, and every man that will live godly will have to suffer persecution. It is impossible for a man to believe and teach the whole truth as it is in Jesus, without enraging some one; and it is impossible for a man to reduce to practice the whole Gospel of Christ, without subjecting himself to reproaches and losses. If a man is resolved to lay aside all error, he is sure to be called a heretic; if he believes the whole truth, he is sure to be pronounced extravagant; and if he will do all that the Gospel commands, he will be represented as quite mad. If he carry out the Gospel fully, he will come across one man's prejudices, he will reprove another man's vices, he will cross a third man's corrupt interests, and he will endanger a fourth man's unrighteous power. He will be very troublesome to worldly, selfish, and ambitious people generally; and we may as well expect a bear to allow herself to be quietly robbed of her whelps, as expect those people quietly to allow themselves to be thus harassed by the man of God. They will do no such thing. If it be in their power, they will put him to silence, and if they cannot do that, they will let loose their rage upon him in ceaseless reproaches, and in every conceivable form of malignant annoyances. Under all these troubles the Scriptures are adapted to yield the man of God abundant consolation. They teach him that God will not suffer him to be tempted beyond what he is able to bear; that nothing can harm him while he is a follower of that which is good; that he shall have strength according to his day; that it is better to suffer for well-doing than for evil-doing; that if we suffer for righteousness' sake, the spirit of glory and of God resteth on us; that as our sufferings abound, our consolations shall abound also; that no sufferings can separate us from the love of God; that if we suffer with Christ, we shall also be glorified with him; that the sufferings of this present life are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us; that all things work together for good to them that love God, and that our light afflictions which are but for a moment, work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. The Scriptures furnish us with abundance of instances, in which God has specially interfered for the protection and deliverance of his persecuted and afflicted people, and in which he has overruled the sufferings and wrongs of his people to their own good, and to the furtherance of truth and righteousness among men. Such abundant sources of consolation does the suffering saint find opened for him in the sacred Scriptures, that he is enabled to "rejoice in tribulation," to "count it all joy when he falls into divers trials," to "rejoice evermore, and in every thing give thanks." With such a book, giving me such instructions, affording me such consolations, and conducting me to everlasting and boundless blessedness, I should be inexcusable indeed if I did not read it, and endeavour to find out its meaning.

5. Again, there are several subjects on which we shall probably be left in entire ignorance, unless we search the Scriptures. There are several subjects of great importance, on which preachers generally never preach at all; and there are several subjects on which you will seldom if ever meet with any thing in the writings of popular authors. One doctrine of Christ is that we are to live at peace,—that we are both to be peaceful ourselves, and try to make peace among others,—that we are to love our enemies, bless them that curse us, do good to them that hate us, and pray for them that despitefully use us and persecute us,—that we are not to be overcome of evil, but to overcome evil with good: and yet this is a doctrine that I never heard preached from the pulpit all the time I sat under the ministry, and which I never found inculcated by any popular religious writer: and I might have remained ignorant of the doctrine to this day, if I had not been led by other means to understand the subject. Another doctrine of Christ is that we should not swear; and yet I never heard a word against swearing from the pulpit in my life. Respect of persons is forbidden by the religion of Christ, and yet respect of persons is practised regularly in nine-tenths of all the

places of worship in our land perhaps, and reproved from none or scarcely any of them. That Christians ought to provide for their poor brethren,—that they ought not to make feasts for their rich friends and neighbours,—that they ought to call no man master on earth,—that they ought not to be unequally yoked together with unbelievers,—that they ought not to lay up treasures for themselves on earth,—that riches are deceitful,—that it is hard for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven,—that we ought to obey God rather than man,—that we ought to judge for ourselves what is right, and that what we judge to be right, after proper consideration and inquiry, we ought to do,—that we ought to receive to our Christian fellowship those whom Christ has received,—that we ought to love our neighbours *as we love ourselves*,—that we ought to do good to the extent of our ability,—that we should be temperate in all things, neither eating, nor drinking, nor dressing to please ourselves or others, but, whether we eat, or drink, or whatever we do, doing all to the glory of God,—that women should not adorn themselves with braided hair, or pearls, or gold, or silver, or costly apparel, but with modesty, and meekness, and good works,—all *these* things, and many others equally important, are taught by Christ and his apostles; and yet we may sit in places of worship for years, and never hear them inculcated from the pulpit; and we may read nearly all the religious works that are published, without meeting with any thing on these matters. If, therefore, you confine yourselves to hearing sermons and reading the works of men, you may never know the whole truth; you may live and die, and never hear of more than one-half or one-tenth of the Gospel of Christ. In many pulpits, not one-tenth of the plain Gospel is preached. That which is preached in many pulpits is no more like the Gospel, than chaff is like wheat, or than smoke is like bread. A great part of what passes now-a-days for evangelical preaching, has scarcely a particle of Gospel about it, either with respect to matter or manner. Multitudes that have sat under what are called evangelical preachers for thirty or forty years, know very little more about the pure Gospel of Christ, than the ignorant dreamers of Hindostan; and multitudes more would have been in the same ignorant and miserable condition, if the defects of their ministers had not been partly made up for, by the use of their own common sense, and some degree of attention to the Scriptures of truth. Some preachers do not understand the Gospel, and some that understand it to some extent, acknowledge that they dare not preach it. A great part of the Gospel is directly contrary to men's carnal inclinations and worldly interests: many parts of the Gospel contradict the customs and fashions of society, and the political and philosophical systems of the age; so that to preach the Gospel entire, would subject a man to reproach and persecution: and great multitudes of preachers are not prepared for any such treatment. And authors are in as great difficulties as preachers, if not greater. If they were to publish the doctrines of the Gospel, they would be pronounced by the critics to be mad. The printers and the publishers would be afraid, lest, in having any thing to do with their books, they should offend their customers, and so ruin their worldly interests. If, therefore, we are to have the whole truth as it is in Jesus,—if we are to know the whole will of God, we must search the Scriptures.

6. Again, if we content ourselves with hearing sermons and reading the works of men,—if we take up things on the authority of men, instead of searching the Scriptures, and trying all we hear or read by their teachings, we shall be led into error. Not only is the preaching of the present day generally defective; but it abounds with error. A great many things are taught as Gospel truths, which are opposed to the Gospel; and many things are taught as lawful or binding on men, which are violations of the Gospel law, and in opposition to the Saviour's example. The principal aim of some preachers appears to be, to establish the minds of their people in the belief of anti-scriptural notions about the divine sovereignty and divine decrees, and about the prin-

ciples and the plan of redemption. Others are almost ceaselessly harping upon the wild horrors of millenarianism, and gloomily descanting on what they mistake for the signs of universal degeneracy. Others lose themselves in types and shadows, and instead of unfolding and enforcing the substantial truths of the Gospel, mock and delude their hearers with foolish and vain conceits. And multitudes of others, each in his own peculiar method, run on in error, some for hire, and some for want of better knowledge, leading their confiding unsuspecting flocks into the pit. Two-thirds, and in some cases nine-tenths, of what is preached and published for the religion of Christ, is error and delusion. And two-thirds or nine-tenths of what many professors of religion try to feed their souls upon, are but husks fit only for the swine to eat. Though the right foundation is laid, yet that which the preachers build upon it is neither gold, nor silver, nor precious stones, but wood, hay, stubble, and in some cases worse things still. Hence the sentiments and practices of professors, and the pulpit ministrations, and the religious literature of the age, present to the minds of observers, a mass of darkness and confusion, revolting to the enlightened mind, and calculated to awaken disgust or contempt for religion in the minds of multitudes, instead of commanding respect and submission.

And there is no remedy for this evil, but in a constant reference to the sacred Scriptures. The Scriptures not only contain the whole truth, but they contain it without any mixture of error. By trying all we hear by them, we may be able to judge what is true, and what is false, what is right, and what is wrong, for ourselves. The Scriptures will serve as a winnowing machine, by which we may separate the wheat from the chaff: or, as a refiner's fire, by which we may separate the dross from the gold. And this, in conjunction with the assistance of the Holy Spirit, is the only way in which we can preserve ourselves from error. It matters not from what quarter we receive our instructions, if we receive them without proper examination,—if we trust on any human authority,—if, instead of trying all we hear by the sacred Scriptures, we receive whatever may be generally taught from the pulpit or the press, we are as sure to become the slaves of error as ever we were born. I look at commentaries and systems of divinity; I look at the decrees of councils and synods, at the decisions of convocations and conferences, at the catechisms and rules of religious denominations, at the writings of the fathers, at the writings of the reformers, and at the writings of the founders of modern sects, and I see both defects and errors in them all. If you implicitly follow any human guide, you err of necessity. Whether you take the Pope or Luther; whether you take Calvin or Arminius; whether you choose Wesley or Whitfield, it is still the same;—follow which you please, without a proper trial of their sentiments by the sacred Scriptures, and you will be inevitably led into error.

But by trying all doctrines by the Scriptures, you may be secured.—Whatever the Scriptures plainly teach, is truth; whatever is opposed to their teachings, is error. Bring all you hear and all you read to this standard, and you may, by the blessing of God, be enabled to escape all the errors and pollutions in the world.

Even supposing that much of what you receive from your teachers should be true, you cannot *know* it to be true, until you have tried it by the Sacred Oracles, and found it to be in agreement with them. And, supposing, that many of those rules and usages by which you are governed were right and good, you could not yourselves *know* them to be such, unless you had compared them with the same divine standard, and found them to be in accordance with it. If, therefore, you neglect the sacred oracles,—if you do not read them and try your sentiments by them, you will be in perpetual uncertainty; you will neither know what you ought to believe, nor what you ought to do.

In short, if you neglect the Scriptures,—if you fail to use them as your book of reference, and to try what you hear and read by them, you will be certain to receive much error, and even the truth itself which you may receive, will fail to accomplish its object. Your minds will be full of confusion; you will be perplexed with perpetual doubts, and even the light that is in you will become darkness. You will be liable to the most serious mistakes. You may take that for a doctrine of Christ, which is no more than a Pagan superstition; and you may reject other things as Pagan or Popish errors, which are in reality doctrines of Christ. You may guard against what the Gospel prescribes as a duty, as if it were sin; and you may be as zealous in what is sinful, as if it were commanded by the law of Christ. You may administer to the souls of your children poison instead of wholesome food, and keep away from them wholesome food as if it were poison. You may reprove one man for doing what is his duty, and you may commend another man for doing what is sin. If you are a leader, you may lead your classes into endless perplexity, and all the while think you are conducting them in the paths of wisdom; and if you are a preacher, you may scatter the seeds of licentiousness and earthliness, and fancy you are scattering the seeds of grace and glory. It is amazing to think what loathsome antinomian errors have been propagated as doctrines of grace. And there is no remedy for such abuses, unless men will return to the Scriptures, and abide by their instructions. For myself, I wish to be free from all those errors and inconsistencies. I wish to have done with perplexity and disorder. I wish to have in my soul the unsullied light of heaven. I wish to see things clearly, without darkness and without confusion. I wish to have certainty. I wish to have no sentiments but what I can see and feel to be true, with the greatest certainty and satisfaction. I would, if it might be granted, be in the light, as God is in the light, and both in my conduct and in my instructions, send forth unmixed, unveiled, unclouded, the brightness of eternal truth. I would have certainty that what I teach to my children, to the members of my classes, to the church and to the public, is nothing but the unadulterated, uncorrupted, living word of God. I would have my words, my ways, and my writings in full harmony with the spirit and teachings of the oracles of God; and I would have a clear, distinct, and a full perception of this harmony. The thought that I might be sending forth darkness, instead of light; that I might be scattering the seed of vice and death, instead of the seeds of holiness and life, would be more than I could well bear. I must therefore see and know, that what I teach, is what God's own lips have uttered, and what God's own hand has sanctioned. I can neither teach nor act on the authority of man. Popes, councils, fathers and conferences, creeds, catechisms, systems and commentaries, I am obliged to regard as nothing, so far as authority is concerned. Let earth be silent; I must hear the voice of God; and when I have heard it, I must speak his words without fear.

7. Again, I am encouraged to search the Scriptures, and to try all things by their teachings, by the fact, that this plan has led, in multitudes of cases, to the happiest results. This was the plan which made Wycliffe, and Luther, and Melancthon, and Baxter, and Fox, and Penn, and Wesley such noble men, and which rendered them such reformers and benefactors of their fellow-men. If they had been content to follow in the old beaten track in which their forefathers had trod,—if they had bowed to the authorities of the times in which they lived, and limited their belief and their proceedings by the creeds and regulations then in force, they might have lived and died in vain. But they took another plan. They consulted the oracles of God; they listened to the voice of the Great Infallible; they set the authorities of earth aside, and received the dictates of Eternal Truth from God's own lips. Their high-born spirits spurned the restraints of erring man, and asserted their blood-bought liberties. They read, they thought, they prayed, they judged, and they taught, as men who felt they must give an account of themselves to God. Popes, councils, and fathers were, as authorities, annihilated in their esteem. Their noble spirits, clothed with immortal vigour, and impelled by the power of the Holy One, freed themselves from the tyranny of ages, shivered the yokes with which they had been galled, to atoms,

snapped asunder the chains which had been forged to bind them, like a slender thread, and spake and acted as the liberated sons of God. They were not allowed to assert their freedom, and to attempt the emancipation of their fellows, with impunity; but the threats and terrors of their persecutors did not dismay them. They were denounced as heretics and infidels; slanders were circulated respecting them without number, some of them horrible and incredible, but they went on their way. The truth that had made them free, made them strong; they were upheld and comforted by the spirit of God; and they became the great, and the honoured of their race, the nobility both of earth and heaven.

And it was the same truth that emancipated them, by which they were enabled to emancipate others. It was by means of the sacred Scriptures, that they succeeded in shaking and throwing down the corrupt institutions of their times, and in enlightening and blessing the souls of men. It was not by creeds and confessions of men's formation, that Luther shook the Popedom, and gave liberty to the nations; but by the Scriptures of truth. It was not by decisions of Conferences that Wykcliffe prepared the way for the liberation and reformation of Britain, but by the oracles of God. It was by these same means that Baxter, and Fox, and Penn were instrumental in riviving the religion of Heaven in later ages; and it was by the same means that Wesley, at a still later period, was instrumental in raising the fallen and slumbering Churches of England, and in breathing the spirit of living active piety through the hearts of multitudes in various parts of the world.

And if we are to be noble, if we are to be mighty, if we are to rise above the earthliness and selfishness of the present age, if we are to be of any considerable use in reviving the religion of Heaven, and in spreading its light and blessings on the earth, we must pursue the same plan. We must be independent and free. We must revere the Scriptures, and we must revere the God that gave them. We must revere the Scriptures, and we must read them; we must search out for ourselves, by the help of God, their proper meaning; and we must bow to no authority besides. We must regard the creeds and rules of men's formation, as lying vanities, when put in competition with the Scriptures. We must regard the dictates, the threats, the denunciations and the slanders of men, as the idle wind. Interest, and ease, and friendships, and even life itself must be held as nothing. We must be prepared to suffer the loss of all, and to be counted as the filth and the offscouring of all things. In this way only can we demolish the strong-holds of error, and remodel, on principles of truth and piety, the institutions of our age; in this way only can we succeed in giving new life and energy to the church, and light and salvation *to the world.*

B.

LUXURY THE PRINCIPAL CAUSE OF OUR NATIONAL DISTRESS.

"THE LUST OF THE EYES, AND THE PRIDE OF LIFE."

VARIOUS causes have been assigned for the secular distress and want which have prevailed more or less in Britain, for the last twenty years. Some are of opinion that they have resulted, in a great measure, from the state of the currency; others think the main cause is the substitution of machinery for manual labour: while very many maintain that they have been produced by superabundant population; the number of inhabitants having gone beyond the means of subsistence. It would not consist with the design of this essay to enter on the consideration of those things. The two former may, doubtless, have some limited and temporary influence; and, in reference to the third, we may be permitted to observe that the population of a country cannot be too great, so long as the inhabitants are able by their labour to procure for themselves the means of comfortable subsistence and mental cultivation; and the inhabitants of a country are not unable to procure these things for themselves, so long as the luxuries which they obtain are equal, in the expense of production, to the useful things which they want. We are not acquainted with any statistics which would determine whether our wants are balanced by our luxuries; nor do we think that such statistics could be obtained; but when we glance over both, we see no cause to doubt that were the use of luxuries abandoned by us, the whole of the inhabitants of our country might enjoy all useful things, and still there would by a surplus, both of physical and mental energy, which might be applied to the improvement of the other sections of mankind. We think, then, that the chief cause of the distress and destitution which have been experienced of late by many of the inhabitants of our country, is the continued and increased use of luxuries, combined with that exhaustion which followed the unnatural excitement produced by our protracted and expensive war with France. The expenses of Government, no doubt, press heavily—expenses which have hitherto been sufficiently extravagant--but the expenses of luxury press more heavily still, for the expense of our intoxicating liquors alone is estimated at nearly half the amount of our annual revenue.

But a notion very generally prevails, that what is consumed in luxury is not lost to the community, because it encourages labour, and promotes trade. Now, there are two processes continually going on in this world, namely, production and consumption; and the latter must ever be promoting the former, else the means of subsistence would soon fail. But whatever is consumed in such a way as neither invigorates the body nor improves the mind, cannot promote production, and must, therefore, be utterly lost to all. It may be put as an objection here, that there are many things partly useful and partly not, which have, consequently, some favourable influence on production. It is readily admitted that such is the case; but could not that part of these which partakes of the nature of luxury be discarded without destroying that which is useful? In a well regulated system of labour and consumption, as in the changes and transformations of nature, nothing is lost; things waste and disappear only to emerge in new forms, while matter is made conducive to the refinement and elevation of spirit, and thus to extend its influence forward to eternal good.

Before pronouncing that a man does good by purchasing the produce of other men's labour, it is necessary to ascertain whether the use which he makes of it enables him to produce something, or perform some service, of at least equal value. If he consumes without performing any useful labour, he injures the community, and reduces its general stock, by so much as is the value of the things so consumed; and unless he have an independent fortune, must himself become a pauper; and though he have an independent fortune, he retards real improvement in proportion to his useless consumption. The man, therefore, who promotes trade by consuming in luxury, does evil instead of good; the natural effect of such consumption is *want*, and if all were thus to consume, starvation would be the necessary consequence. So long as many of the inhabitants of our country are destitute of the means of obtaining wholesome food, and comfortable clothing, and habitations, and while so many of them are still woefully destitute of useful knowledge, a high responsibility attaches to those who possess wealth.

In consequence of the use of luxuries, the proprietor of land must have more rent from the farmer than he would otherwise require; and the farmer in turn must have a higher price for his produce; and the labourer needs higher wages to enable him to procure food. Were the use of luxuries abandoned, as the expenditure of all would be diminished, and much time saved, all would have more opportunities for mental cultivation. The mind is infinitely the most valuable part of man, and to its improvement every labour should be subsidiary; but the majority act, at present, as if the reverse were true; —both mind and body are strained to procure gratification for the senses. The production and the use of luxuries prevent the great body of the people from rightly cultivating their minds, and deprive many of the means of educating their children. But for the use of luxuries, all those children now prematurely consigned by the poverty of their parents to severe and unhealthy occupations, might be sent to school, and acquire the rudiments of useful knowledge.

The great increase of scholars, which would thus be produced, would require a proportionate increase of teachers; these teachers and scholars, being drawn from the class of manual labourers, would leave room for those who are at present unemployed. Nor would this be all; many more books would be required, not only school books, but works in general literature and science. A vastly increased demand would thus be created for the productions of mind; and, consequently, much more employment given to all those engaged about the making and vending of books. Besides, many more would be employed in lecturing on natural science; every village and parish might have its course of lectures, which would be much more favourable to the health, as well as to the intellectual and moral improvement of the people, than the dangerous excitements of the tavern and the ball-room.

Luxury is thus productive of incalculable evils to all classes. It greatly deprives the rich of the means of supplying the wants of the destitute; but, far from being, as is generally supposed, confined [in its ravages] to them, it pilfers the cabins of the poor, and strips even the wandering beggar of his tattered garments. If it promotes trade, it does so in the manner in which a hurricane or a conflagration promotes it.

None who are engaged in beneficial mental labours are to be classed with those who consume unproductively; those who are so engaged, are really, though indirectly, the most productive of all labourers, as those discoveries and inventions generally emanate from one class of them which diminish labour, and increase production: and as the energies of others (of this class) are applied to the intellectual and moral improvement of mankind.

Were luxury and idleness to increase in the same ratio with production, wretchedness and want must increase in the same ratio with population. Though labour be the great source of wealth, if the production of luxuries engross a large portion of the labour which is requisite for the production of necessary and useful things, poverty must be the inevitable consequence. For nothing can be obtained without labour; even the savages who live on the spontaneous productions of nature, must gather the fruits and hunt the animals on which they subsist. As production must always be proportioned to consumption, the less the members of a community consume, the less will they require to labour for the supply of their own wants. If the inhabitants of our country would give up the use of spirits, tobacco, and other pernicious and useless things, they would save an incalculable amount of labour, which might be applied to promote the good of their fellow-men.

And in thus ceasing from the production and use of luxuries, they would not only continue to have as much real wealth as at present, but might actually have much more; for they would be free from all those diseases which luxury produces, and consequently, all those expenses would be avoided which these diseases occasion, and all the time might be devoted to useful labour, which under them is lost. Besides, all the animal and mechanical powers now employed in the production of luxuries, would be at their command.

It may be objected here, that no definite line can be drawn between luxuries and useful things. It is admitted that no such line can be drawn, of universal application; as, from constitution and circumstances, what would be a luxury to one, may be necessary or useful for another. It cannot, therefore, be reasonably demanded of us that we should attempt to draw any such line. But under a deep impression of the value of labour and property, as means for our own mental and moral improvement; and as instruments requisite for the conversion of a world "that lieth in wickedness,"—instruments, the greatest possible application of which to this object, is demanded with all the urgency which the infinite value of myriads of immortal souls can impart,—under that deep impression of the value of labour and property which such considerations as these are adapted to produce, we would ask, whether it is not the duty of every one to endeavour to draw such a line for himself?

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Let us suppose we enter a city; a splendid public building just completed attracts our attention; we admire the lightness and elegance of its columns, the lofty swell of its dome, and the chaste harmony of all its parts. We ascend, in order to obtain a view of the town; we are painfully struck with a large section just beneath us. Extended masses of old, black, and decayed houses, huddled and crowded together in confusion; crooked, dingy, and narrow streets, branching off into innumerable lanes and alleys, dirtier, narrower, and more gloomy still. The dwellers there, as they move out and in, and along,—ragged, filthy, and cadaverous—painfully impress us with the conviction, that it is the domain of wretchedness and vice. We behold a pale and ragged boy moving along, he seems crushed with oppressive toil, urging on his reluctant limbs. Our eye follows him in his course, as he passes up that crooked lane, till he enters one of its gloomiest hovels. What will it contribute to the comfort or refinement of his condition that he is privileged to behold this splendid building as he passes daily to his toil, when each night he has to return to that dingy cabin where the rain patters through the roof, and the cold wind whistles through the creaking window—that cabin which no bright sunbeam ever cheers.

Painful and depressing reflections crowd upon us, and we ask, was there no way in which the money and the labour lavished in embellishing this edifice could have been applied so as to have produced an abatements of such evils! Might not a new street have been opened through the most crowded part of these wretched abodes, admitting among them sunlight and free air! And might not the most unsightly of the remaining buildings have been removed, and the rest cleaned and repaired? Could not a school have been built, a teacher procured, and these children, wandering and prowling about in such numbers, have been rescued from vice and ruin?

These are momentous questions, and yet others far more so press on our minds while contemplating such applications of labour and property. You, by whom this costly edifice was reared, adhere in profession to the religion of Christ? Be it so. If, while it was in progress, you had heard that there were several thousands of persons in England, in France, or even in Ceylon, destitute of food, and utterly unable to procure it; and had there been but this alternative,—either you must forego your splendid portico and the sphynxes wherewith you mean to adorn the roof, or these thousands of your fellow-men must die of hunger, devouring one another:—would you for a moment have hesitated? And yet, while this magnificent structure was planned, there were not merely some thousands, but many millions of your fellow-men entirely destitute of the proper aliment of the soul,—"perishing for lack of knowledge." And the command was given you as distinctly as if daily issued anew by a voice from heaven—"Go, and teach them—teach all nations." You knew that they were perishing, perishing everlastingly; that book which you receive as divine told you so. And what did you do—did you forego the tasteful and imposing adornments of your building? No, the building here was reared in all its magnificence, and they—were left to perish.—*From "Hours of Thought.*"*

THE CHARACTER OF A CHRISTIAN.

WHEN a Christian minister or writer draws a faithful sketch of the exalted state of holiness, and the *broad* and universal subjection of body, soul, and spirit, which the Gospel claims, the expression extorted from the multitude is,—"That is a lovely theory, but who, in such a world as this, does, or who can, realise it." Now this is *infidelity;* and that of the worst description. If he be a fool who says there is no God, what is he, who being convinced that God *is*, will maintain that He requires that which cannot be performed.

We believe that Christian ministers very rarely place the standard of Christian experience or practice in too strong a light. It is generally, because we do not know and consider the "exceeding greatness of the power," the "mighty working" of the Holy Ghost in those who believe, that we stumble at the exceeding great and precious promises of the Gospel, and consequently come short of them.

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* A well written and exceedingly interesting little volume, by WM. M'COMBIE, author of "*The Christian Church Considered* in *Relation to Unity and Schism*," and published by Ward & Co., Paternoster Row, London.

Now we will present two sketches of Christian character, the one, given by inspiration, and the other, one of the most exalted of uninspired descriptions. And we beseech a careful comparison of them. And further, we suggest that in future, when we are inclined to look upon any exhortations to duty which we may listen to as being carried to an extreme, it would be the *safest* plan to appeal to the law and the testimony; especially to such parts of Scripture as the following. The whole passage may be found in the 12th and 13th chapters of Romans.

"So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy, according to the proportion of faith; or ministry, let us wait on our ministering; or he that teacheth, on teaching; or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness. Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another; not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer; distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality. Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not. Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep. Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits. Recompense no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore, if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good. Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God; and they that resist, shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: for he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. Wherefore, ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. For, for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour. Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law. And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof."

We now subjoin our second portraiture of a true Christian, as already alluded to.

"A Christian is one who has the love of God shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost given unto him; one who 'loves the Lord his God with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his mind, and with all his strength.' God is the joy of his heart, and the desire of his soul; which is constantly crying out, 'Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee! My God and my all! Thou art the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever!'

"He is therefore happy in God, yea, always happy, as having in him 'a well of water springing up into everlasting life,' and overflowing his soul with peace and joy. 'Perfect love' having now 'cast out fear,' he 'rejoices evermore.' He 'rejoices in the Lord always,' even 'in God his Saviour;' and in the Father, 'through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom he hath now received the atonement.' 'Having' found 'redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of his sins,' he cannot but rejoice, whenever he looks back on the horrible pit out of which he is delivered; when he sees 'all his transgressions blotted out as a cloud, and his iniquities as a thick cloud.' He cannot but rejoice, whenever he looks on the state wherein he now is; 'being justified freely, and having peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.' For 'he that believeth, hath the witness' of this 'in himself;' being now the son of God by faith. 'Because he is a son, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into his heart, crying, Abba, Father!' And 'the Spirit itself beareth witness with his spirit, that he is a child of God.' He rejoiceth also, whenever he looks forward, 'in hope of the glory that shall be revealed;' yea, this his joy is full, and all his bones cry out, 'Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten me again to a living hope—of an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for me!'

"And he who hath this hope, thus 'full of immortality,' 'in everything giveth thanks;' as knowing that this (whatsoever it is) 'is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning him.' From him, therefore, he cheerfully receives all, saying 'Good is the will of the Lord;' and whether the Lord giveth or taketh away, equally 'blessing the name of the Lord.' For he hath 'learned, in whatsoever state he is, therewith to be content.' He knoweth 'both how to be abased, and how to abound. Everywhere and in all things he is instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and suffer need.' Whether in ease or pain, whether in sickness or health, whether in life or death, he giveth thanks from the ground of his heart to him who orders it for good; knowing that as 'every good gift cometh from above,' so none but good can come from the Father of Lights, into whose hand he has wholly committed his body and soul, as into the hands of a faithful Creator. He is therefore 'careful' (anxiously or uneasily) 'for nothing;' as having 'cast all his care on him that careth for him,' and 'in all things' resting on him, after 'making his request known to him with thanksgiving.'

"For indeed he 'prays without ceasing.' It is given him 'always to pray, and not to faint.' Not that he is always in the house of prayer; though he neglects no opportunity of being there. Neither is he always on his knees, although he often is, or on his face, before the Lord his God. Nor yet is he always crying aloud to God, or calling upon him in words; for many times 'the Spirit maketh intercession for him with groans that cannot be uttered.' But at all times the language of his heart is this: 'Thou brightness of the eternal glory, unto thee is my heart, though without a voice, and my silence speaketh unto thee.' And this is true prayer, and this alone. But his heart is ever lifted up to God, at all times and in all places. In this he is never hindered, much less interrupted, by any person or thing. In retirement or company, in leisure, business, or conversation, his heart is ever with the Lord. Whether he lie down or rise up, God is in all his thoughts ; he walks with God continually, having the loving eye of his mind still fixed upon him, and everywhere 'seeing him that is invisible.'

"And while he thus always exercises his love to God, by praying without ceasing, rejoicing evermore, and in everything giving thanks, this commandment is written in his heart, 'That he who loveth God, love his brother also.' And he accordingly loves his neighbour as himself ; he loves every man as his own soul. His heart is full of love to all mankind, to every child of 'the Father of the spirits of all flesh.' That a man is not personally known to him, is no bar to his love ; no, nor that he is known to be such as he approves not, that he repays hatred for his good-will. For he 'loves his enemies ;' yea, and the enemies of God, 'the evil and the unthankful.' And if it be not in his power to 'do good to them that hate him,' yet he ceases not to pray for them, though they continue to spurn his love, and still 'despitefully use him and persecute him.'

"For he is 'pure in heart.' The love of God has purified his heart from all revengeful passions, from envy, malice, and wrath, from every unkind temper or malign affection. It hath cleansed him from pride and haughtiness of spirit, whereof alone cometh contention. And he hath now 'put on bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering :' so that he 'forbears and forgives, if he had a quarrel against any ; even as God in Christ hath forgiven him.' And indeed all possible ground for contention, on his part, is utterly cut off. For none can take from him what he desires ; seeing he 'loves not the world, nor' any of 'the things of the world ;' being now 'crucified to the world, and the world crucified to him ;' being dead to all that is in the world, both to 'the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life.' For 'all his desire is unto God, and to the remembrance of his name.'

"Agreeable to this his one desire, is the one design of his life ; namely, 'not to do his own will, but the will of Him that sent him.' His one intention at all times, and in all things is, not to please himself, but Him whom his soul loveth. He has a single eye. And because 'his eye is single, his whole body is full of light.' Indeed, where the loving eye of the soul is continually fixed upon God, there can be no darkness at all, 'but the whole is light ; as when the bright shining of a candle doth enlighten the house.' God then reigns alone. All that is in the soul is holiness to the Lord. There is not a motion in his heart but is according to his will. Every thought that arises points to Him, and is in obedience to the law of Christ.

"And the tree is known by its fruits. For as he loves God, so he keeps his commandments ; not only some, or most of them, but all, from the least to the greatest. He is not content to 'keep the whole law, and offend in one point ;' but has, in all points, 'a conscience void of offence towards God and towards man.' Whatever God has forbidden, he avoids ; whatever God hath enjoined, he doeth : and that whether it be little or great, hard or easy, joyous or grievous to the flesh. He 'runs the way of God's commandments,' now he hath set his heart at liberty. It is his glory so to do ; it is his daily crown of rejoicing 'to do the will of God on earth, as it is done in heaven ;' knowing it is the highest privilege of 'the angels of God, of those that excel in strength, to fulfil his commandments, and hearken to the voice of his word.'

"All the commandments of God he accordingly keeps, and that with all his might. For his obedience is in proportion to his love, the source from whence it flows. And therefore loving God with all his heart, he serves him with all his strength. He continually presents his soul and body a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God ; entirely and without reserve devoting himself, all he has, and all he is, to his glory. All the talents he has received, he constantly employs according to his Master's will : every power and faculty of his soul, every member of his body. Once he 'yielded' them 'unto sin' and the devil, 'as instruments of unrighteousness ;' but now, 'being alive from the dead, he yields' them all 'as instruments of righteousness unto God.'

"By consequence, whatsoever he doeth, it is all to the glory of God. In all his employments, of every kind, he not only aims at this, (which is implied in having a single eye,) but actually attains it. His business and refreshments, as well as his prayers, all serve this great end. Whether he sit in his house or walk by the way, whether he lie down or rise up, he is promoting, in all he speaks or does, the one business of his life; whether he put on his apparel, or labour, or eat and drink, or divert himself from too wasting labour, it all tends to advance the glory of God, by peace and good-will among men. His one invariable rule is this, 'Whatsoever ye do, in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.'

"Nor do the customs of the world at all hinder his 'running the race that is set before him.' He knows that vice does not lose its nature, though it becomes ever so fashionable; and remembers that 'every man is to give an account of himself to God.' He cannot, therefore, 'follow' even 'a multitude to do evil.' He cannot 'fare sumptuously every day,' or 'make provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.' He cannot 'lay up (for himself) treasures upon earth,' any more than he can take fire into his bosom. He cannot 'adorn himself,' on any pretence, 'with gold or costly apparel.' He cannot join in or countenance any diversion which has the least tendency to vice of any kind. He cannot 'speak evil' of his neighbour, any more than he can lie either for God or man. He cannot utter an unkind word of any one; for love keeps the door of his lips. He cannot speak 'idle words:' no 'corrupt communication' ever 'comes out of his mouth,' as is all that 'which is' not 'good to the use of edifying,' not 'fit to minister grace to the hearers.' But 'whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are' justly 'of good report,' he thinks, and speaks, and acts, 'adorning the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ in all things.'

"Lastly: As he has time, he 'does good unto all men;' unto neighbours and strangers, friends and enemies; and that in every possible kind: not only to their bodies, by 'feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, visiting those that are sick or in prison;' but much more does he labour to do good to their souls, as of the ability which God giveth; to awaken those that sleep in death; to bring those who are awakened to the atoning blood, that, 'being justified by faith, they may have peace with God;' and to provoke those who have peace with God, to abound more in love and in good works. And he is willing to 'spend and be spent herein,' even 'to be offered up on the sacrifice and service of their faith,' so they may 'all come unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.'"—*John Wesley.*

Such is the influence of the religion of Jesus Christ. Such is Christianity. Such is a *Christian.* No matter what the name, or the profession, *this*, and this only, is the thing: a man is a Christian so far, and only so far, as he is what has been described.

To make us such characters, is the end of the whole Christian dispensation. To make us such was the design of all that the Redeemer did, and of all that he endured. That such a character might be *ours*, he left a throne in heaven. He did not abhor the virgin's womb. He made himself of no reputation, but was found in fashion as a man:

> "Object of his creatures scorn,
> Pleased the servant's form to wear."

He was acquainted with grief. He was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. He hungered. He thirsted. He had not where to lay his head. He wept, he prayed, and, being in an agony, he prayed the more earnestly. His soul was exceeding sorrowful. He sweat great drops of blood. Then, indeed, was he heard exclaiming, "if it be possible let this cup pass from me," yet even then, he said, "not my will, but thine be done." He was arrested as a thief, when he might have been rescued by "more than ten legions of angels." He was mocked, and spit upon, and in derision crowned with thorns. He was crucified between transgressors. He prayed, "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do." He died. All this was done and suffered to make us Christians. And is it, after all this, impossible that we should become such? yea, such as has been described? God forbid. No! brethren, we *may* be such. And if we be faithful to the grace given, we *shall* be such. "*Then* shall we know, *if we follow on to know* the Lord." S

THE HINDRANCES TO MEN'S SALVATION.

We have explained the *conditions* of salvation in a preceding article, and we now wish to lay before our readers a few remarks on the *great hindrances* to men's salvation.

1. The great reason why so many of those who hear the Gospel from time to time are not saved, is not so much a disbelief of the truth, as an unwillingness to submit themselves to the authority of God. There are very few indeed of those who regularly attend a place of worship, who do not believe the Gospel to have come from God. The number of downright unbelievers,—of such as regard the Gospel as a cunningly devised fable,—is exceedingly small. Even among the people of our land generally, there are few, I imagine, whatever may be their sentiments and characters in other respects, who do not regard the religion of Christ as divine, and who do not receive its leading facts and principles as true. If, therefore, nothing more was necessary to salvation than a mere belief of Gospel truths,—if there were no greater difficulty in the way of salvation, than what stands in the way of believing the great doctrines of the Gospel,—the number of the unsaved would be very small indeed. But this is not the case. The great hindrance to salvation is in man's *will.* The Gospel requires man to give up things, which he is not willing to give up; and it requires him to do things, which he is not willing to do; and it is here that men are undone. There are many things which the Gospel forbids, which are exceedingly pleasant to our carnal mind; and men are unwilling to relinquish those pleasant things. There are, on the other hand, many things which the Gospel requires men to do, which are very painful; and men are unwilling to subject themselves to pain. The requirements of the Gospel are frequently at variance with men's worldly interests, and men choose rather to neglect the precepts of the Gospel, than to risk their worldly interests. There is, in short, a conflict between duty and inclination, and the cause of men's ruin is, that instead of sacrificing inclination to duty, they sacrifice duty to inclination. Either they resolve not to obey God, or they hesitate, and wickedly halt between two opinions. We would endeavour to illustrate this part of our subject by a number of particulars.

1. We have already observed that the Gospel requires absolute subjection to the will of God. It requires us to *deny* ourselves, to give up the entire government of ourselves into the hands of God. It will not allow us to be our own masters in any thing: our interests, our pleasures, our liberty and our lives are all to be left at the disposal of Heaven. It requires us to consult God's will in all we do. "Whether we eat, or drink, or *whatever* we do, we are to do all to the glory of God." It requires us to ask, in all things, not what would please *ourselves*, but what will please God. God is to be our ruler, our portion, our all. And this is not agreeable to man in his natural state. We are all naturally desirous of being our own masters. The desire to rule ourselves, is one of the strongest principles in our nature; and the thought of being in full subjection to the will of another, crosses our whole soul. We want to be at liberty to rule ourselves—to do whatever may be most agreeable to our own inclinations, without restraint—and, like the men in the parable, when Christ comes to claim dominion over us, there is something within us that rises in rebellion against him, and we say in our hearts, if not with our lips, "We will not have this man to rule over us." We have no objection to receive Christ as a *teacher*, and we have no objection to receive him as a priest; but we are not willing to receive him as our *king*. We should have no objection to hear of his doctrine, provided we were not required to reduce it to practice: we should be willing enough to enjoy his blessings, provided we were not

required to yield to his authority. But this cannot be. If we would have Christ at all, we must receive him *entire.* Christ cannot be divided. If we would have him to forgive our sins, and to bless us with peace and joy, we must have him to renovate our souls, and to regulate our lives. And here it is that men are undone: they will not relinquish their carnal liberty; they will not surrender themselves to God, and place themselves in subjection to the authority of Christ.

2. Again, men have not only a general reluctance to give up themselves to be governed by God, but they perceive, when they read the Gospel, as we have already intimated, that a number of its requirements are in direct opposition to their carnal inclinations, or to their worldly interests, and every such requirement occasions fresh difficulty. Perhaps the man has been brought up to some bad business—some business which he cannot follow without injuring the bodies and the souls of his fellow-men. He may have been trained to be a soldier, and devoted to the work of destroying his fellow-men; but he perceives that if he is to be a Christian, he must lay aside the work of death, and instead of killing his enemies, try to convert them into friends by doing them good. He may have been brought up to the business of making cards and dice, or other instruments and apparatus for gambling; and he cannot continue to pursue such a business without being a partaker of other men's sins. He may be deriving his bread from the sale of drinks or drugs that are injurious to the health and morals of the community. He may be a printer, a bookseller, or a bookbinder, and a considerable portion of the work that comes to hand, may be such as a lover of God and of mankind cannot consistently do. He sees that it will be impossible for him to be a thorough-going, consistent Christian, without relinquishing his present means of living, and subjecting himself and his family to hardship and to want. What shall he do? If he may set the Gospel aside, he can go on in his business prosperously, to all appearance; but if he is to hearken to the voice of Christ and follow him, he must forsake all. And here is the difficulty; and here is the conflict. The way of duty is plain, but he cannot enter it without a painful sacrifice; and it is because men are unwilling to make the sacrifice, and trust their all with God, that they are not saved.

3. There is another man who fills a situation which requires him to do things which the Gospel forbids, or which will not allow him to do the things which the Gospel commands. He is a servant in a public office, and obliged, if he would retain his place, to write out legal documents for the transfer of slaves, or to sell shares in some lottery or gambling speculation, or to take part in some fraudulent and dishonest transaction; and he sees that if he were to embrace the Gospel, and give up himself to be governed by its principles, he would have to relinquish his situation. This was the case with Thomas Shillito, a member of the Society of Friends. He had, if I mistake not, a situation in a bank, and was required to sell shares in a lottery. This he saw to be inconsistent with the religion of Christ, and he felt himself obliged either to leave his situation, or to set at nought the authority of Christ. He acted his part nobly, and relinquished his situation, and sought to earn his bread by learning the art of shoemaking. Adam Clarke was placed in somewhat similar circumstances. He had a situation in the warehouse of a linen-merchant in Coleraine. Adam was one day employed with his master in measuring and folding some linen pieces, when one of the pieces was found short of the required number of yards. "Come," says the master to Adam, "It is but a trifle, we shall soon stretch it, and make out the yard." The proposal appeared to Adam to be dishonest, and he refused to have anything to do with it. A long argument and expostulation followed, in which the usages of the trade were strongly and variously urged, but all in vain. Adam had no ears for such reasoning, and he chose rather to suffer than to sin. His master soon after informed him that it was clear he was not fit for worldly business, and wished him to look out for some other employ-

ment. Trials of this kind have fallen to the lot of God's people in every age. When Abraham was called, he was obliged to give up his all, and leave both his friends and his property, or else disobey the voice of God. And so with Moses. When he came of age, and first became sensible of his duty to God, he was regarded as the son of Pharoah's daughter, and appears to have had at his command all the treasures and honours of Egypt. On the one hand there were "the pleasures of sin;" on the other "the afflictions of the people of God:" on the one hand there were "the treasures of Egypt;" on the other "the reproach of Christ:" yet Moses preferred the calls of duty to everything. "He refused to be called the son of Pharoah's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt,—because he had respect unto the recompense of the reward." And it is because men hesitate under such trials to make the requisite sacrifices, that so many are lost.

Cases of this description are occurring daily. One man has got a number of slaves, and he sees it impossible for him to be a Christian, unless he sets them free; and yet to set them free may reduce him to poverty perhaps, and subject him to reproach as well. Another has houses and land, which he lets for purposes of vice and folly. He sees that to let his houses or lands for such purposes is contrary to the spirit and teachings of the Gospel, and yet should he refuse to let them for such purposes, he would be obliged to sacrifice a portion of his rents. Another gains money by deceit, but he cannot continue to employ deceit if he is to obey the Gospel of Christ. All these feel it difficult to relinquish their unholy gains, and perhaps they hesitate whether to relinquish them or not; but they must either relinquish them, or give up all hopes of salvation. And it is men's unwillingness to give up their carnal interest for Christ, which proves the ruin of multitudes.

4. Multitudes are undone by their refusal to part with their ungodly pleasures. They have indulged their appetites till they have become slaves to them, and they cannot free themselves from their bondage without great pain. Some are slaves to drink, and cannot break loose from their bondage without a long and painful conflict; and rather than put themselves to so much pain, multitudes perish continually. Another is a slave to his cards, and a third to his gun; a fourth is led captive by his love of theatrical exhibitions, and a fifth is taken up with the vanities of dress and ornaments. They see clearly that the religion of Christ is opposed to those vain pleasures, and that if they are to be Christians they must relinquish them; and rather than suffer the pain attending the sacrifice of their favourite indulgences, they risk their eternal all.

5. Some are undone by their refusal to part with their ungodly companions. The Gospel requires us to be separate from sinners as well as from sin; it requires us to come out from among the ungodly and be separate, and to touch not the unclean. But the person has fixed his affections on some ungodly individual, and it requires a vigorous and painful effort to tear them off; and he chooses rather to throw away his soul, than to mortify his carnal and idolatrous attachment. I knew a case of this kind. The youth was convinced of the truth of religion, and he saw the desirableness of its blessings; but his affections were given to an unbeliever. His chief companion and his bosom friend was a thoughtless giddy creature, and he was unwilling to break off his attachment. He had many a painful struggle, but still, alas, he allowed conscience to be overpowered by passion, and rather than give up his idol, he rejected the counsel of God.

6. The Gospel requires men to confess their sins. "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us; but if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." When the poor prodigal returned to his father, he exclaimed,—"Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son:" and

whoever would obtain peace to his soul, must approach God in a similar way. And it is no easy thing to throw ourselves at the footstool of mercy, and acknowledge our guilt and unworthiness. The proud heart of the sinner does not like such humiliation, and many, we have reason to believe, shut themselves out from eternal life, rather than thus humble themselves before God.

7. Again, some are exceedingly revengeful. When they receive an insult or an injury, they cannot rest until they have returned it. Or if they do not return an injury, they cherish unkind feelings towards the person who injured them, and shut them out from all share in their affections and good-will. This is in direct opposition to the Gospel. The Gospel requires us "to forgive those who injure us; to love our enemies; to do good to those who hate us; to bless those who curse us, and pray for those who despitefully use us and persecute us." It will not allow us to cherish a revengeful feeling towards any one; it will not allow us to avenge ourselves in any case. It makes the forgiveness of our enemies by us, a condition of our forgiveness by God. "If ye forgive men their trespasses, your Heavenly Father will also forgive you your trespasses; but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Heavenly Father forgive you your trespasses." This is a very terrible doctrine to the revengeful, and yet numbers, we fear, rather than forgive and love their enemies, choose madly to shut themselves out from the mercy of God. I have heard or read of two individuals, both of which were convinced of the truth of religion, and were become exceedingly anxious for the salvation of their souls; but there was a quarrel between them, and neither seemed disposed to forgive the other, or to propose a reconciliation. They prayed, but their prayers were not answered; they went among God's people, hoping to find comfort there, but still their souls remained cheerless, and dark, and troubled: their efforts to find peace were all in vain. And how could it be otherwise, so long as they refused to obey the command of the Lord? At length their proud revengeful hearts gave way; they acknowledged their faults to each other, and wept over each other in love; and while they made peace with each other, they found peace with God, and were enabled to rejoice in his salvation.

8. The Gospel requires men, if they would be forgiven, to *ask* for forgiveness. The Redeemer taught us, when we pray, to say, "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us." "Ask," says he, "and it shall be given; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you." When the publican went into the temple, afflicted with the remembrance of his sins, and anxious for relief, he exclaimed, "God be merciful to me a sinner." And God heard his prayer, and sent him down to his house justified.—And whoever would obtain pardon, must imitate the publican's example. Some stop short of salvation here: they will not pray. They believe the Gospel, and they are troubled at the recollection of their sins, and at the thoughts of God and eternity; but they will not bend their knees, or bow their souls before God in prayer. It is strange, that that which should be man's element, should prove a task; yet so it is: so great, so unaccountable is the proud rebelliousness of man's heart. There are multitudes who "*have* not, because they *ask* not."

9. The Gospel requires men to do to others as they would that others should do unto them. This commandment is exceeding broad, and would require them to forego many opportunities of earthly gain; and this, to such as are lovers of wealth, creates another difficulty. The Gospel requires us to love our neighbours as ourselves, and to do good to all men as we have opportunity. It teaches us that wealth is a trust from God, and neither to be wasted in extravagance, nor laid up for ourselves as a security against future calamities; but to be employed in doing good. And some are startled at this. To be required to employ *all* for God, and to leave ourselves entirely at his disposal, without any security from future want but his promise, appears too much. They wish to care a little for themselves; they are unwilling to risk *all* in works of beneficence, and to withdraw themselves from

every earthly security; and their "love of money," their "trust in uncertain riches," proves their ruin. This was the case with the young man mentioned in Matt. xix, v. 16. He came to Christ and "asked him, saying, Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? He saith unto him, If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." When the commandments were mentioned, the young man said, "All these have I kept from my youth up; what lack I yet? Jesus saith unto him, If thou wilt be perfect,"—if thou wilt do everything necessary to eternal life,—"go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven, and come and follow me. But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions." He was not fully subjected to the will of God. He wished to be left free to retain or to employ his wealth for selfish purposes. He was unwilling to leave it to God to choose his inheritance for him, and to appoint what should be his lot. He was not willing to give up all for Christ, and this was his undoing. And it is the undoing of millions. Christ still requires those who would inherit eternal life to give up all. Though he may not require them to give away at once the whole of their property in alms, he requires them to relinquish all their fancied right to it, to hold it simply as a trust from him, and to employ it in subservience to his will. He requires them to *waste* nothing; he requires them to lay up nothing for themselves on earth; he requires them not to love their wealth or to trust in it, but to regard it and to use it simply as a means of doing good, and to be willing to part with it all rather than in any instance violate their consciences by sinning against God. And this is more than many are willing to do. They are resolved to hold or use their property for themselves. They are determined, if they can help it, not to run the risk of being poor. They have interests of their own, apart from the interests of Christ, and they are determined to maintain those interests. And this their selfishness is their ruin.

10. Again, it always has been the case in ages past, and it is so still, that a man cannot act upon the principles of the Gospel, without incurring reproach. Some seem to think that the religion of Christ is now fashionable, and that to be a Christian is the way to general favour; but they are greatly mistaken. If a man will carry out the principles of the Gospel thoroughly, he is sure to be reproached and derided. Whatever may be the case with some portions of the religion of Christ, they are not *all* fashionable yet. And though honour may await the faithful and thorough-going Christian farther on in his journey, he will have to make his way for a length of time through much abuse and calumny. All manner of evil, however false, will be spoken of him, and he will be counted by some as a general plague, as the filth and offscouring of all things. One will tell him that he makes too much of little things; another will tell him that he was born too soon, and that his views and plans are only adapted to an entirely new state of society, and that they are altogether wild and chimerical as things are now. One man will charge him with unkindness to his wife, for not providing differently for her support in case of his removal from her; and another will charge him with a want of natural affection, for not laying up fortunes for his children. If he be valiant for the truth, and determined against error and sin, he will be called a heretic, a fanatic, a madman; and if after repeated efforts from his friends and kindred to restrain him, he should still go forward, regarding nothing but the will of God and the welfare of the world, abuse will be poured forth against him like a flood. And it is no light matter to flesh and blood to be thus abused. It is no light matter to be laughed at and mocked by those who once loved and commended us. And when men foresee that such reproach and dishonour are likely to come upon them if they embrace the religion of Christ, they are seized at times with fear and trembling, and some are driven by the fear of reproach to reject the salvation of the Gospel altogether.

11. It frequently happens that men are influenced in reference to religion by a mere foolish shame. They have

been so long without going to a place of worship, that they are *ashamed* to go. They are afraid that people will look at them, and talk of them; and the idea of being noticed is unpleasant to them. They have never been accustomed to read the sacred Scriptures to their family, or to bow down with their wife and children in prayer, and they are ashamed to begin to their duty in this also. Others feel ashamed to acknowledge their respect for religion, and their desire to be Christians, before their fellow-workmen or their neighbours. They could like to be religious, and no one know it. To confess Christ before men,—to acknowledge that they have been all their past life in error, and that they are now convinced that the religion of Christ is the only way to safety and happiness, and that therefore they are resolved to be henceforth governed by its influence and authority, appears too much for them to do. And some allow themselves to be kept from salvation in this way.

12. In some cases severe persecution stands in men's way. They work for men that are enemies to religion, and that will not keep a professor of religion in their employ. Or their fellow-workmen are opposed to religion, and take every opportunity of annoying any one who may show any desire to live to God. They not only deride and reproach him, but they try to hinder him in his work, and to render it impossible for him to earn his bread. To bear up under such annoyances, and by kindness and meekness to weary out our persecutors, is an arduous and painful undertaking; and an undertaking for which few, alas, appear to be prepared.

And thus it is that men are ruined. They are not left without light: the Gospel shines around them with all its brightness: they are not unbelievers; they have not a single serious doubt of the truth of the Gospel: but they are not prepared to deny themselves and take up their cross: they are not prepared to give up their interests and their lives into the hands of God, and receive their portion and felicity entirely from him. It is *self-will* that is the ruin of men. They will not acknowledge the supreme, the sole, the absolute authority of God. The Gospel requires them to be converted, and to become as little children,—it seeks to bring them back to a state of complete oneness with God, so that they shall have no will but his, and seek no happiness but his smile, and desire no protection but his gracious providence,—and to submit to so great and absolute a change is a serious thing. Man's carnal selfish nature revolts at it, and longs to be a ruler and a God to itself; and it is by yielding to their carnal, selfish inclinations, in opposition to the manifested will of God, that men destroy themselves.

And now, my unconverted readers, I leave these observations with you. I have shown you what it is that God requires of you in order to your salvation. I have explained to you the nature of that faith to which pardon and salvation are promised; and shown you what is meant by receiving Christ, by coming to Christ, and by being born again. I have shown you that the whole of what God requires of you is, that you should believe his truth, that you should submit to his authority, and that you should rely upon his promises. I have also endeavoured to show you what are the great hindrances to your salvation. There is no great difficulty in the way of believing the religion of Christ to be true; nor is there, when men become truly and thoroughly obedient to the Divine Will, any difficulty in relying upon the mercy of God, or trusting in the crucified Redeemer. The believing obedient soul rests on redeeming love as a matter of course, and delights itself in the fulness of the blessings of the Gospel without fear. As we have shown, the great difficulty in the way of salvation is your own will. If you are not saved, it is because you will not submit to God's terms, and resign yourselves to God's will. The Redeemer may address to you the words he addressed to the Jews of old, "Ye will not come unto me that ye might have life." And shall it be thus with you for ever? Will you, with your duty plain before you, still urge on your way to ruin? Have you deliberately resolved that you will shut yourselves out of heaven and happiness for ever? Or do you think that by your delays you can induce God to alter his terms, or that in process of time you will be able to renounce your sins and surrender yourselves to God with less pain and trouble? It cannot be. I beseech you to cast such foolish hopes away at once. If you should put off your salvation for forty years, the terms of salvation would remain the same, and the difficulty of complying with those terms, instead of being lessened, would be increased. I beseech you yield to the will of God at once. Hearken to the voice of the flesh and of the devil no longer. Your condition is one of great danger. The last warning you may ever have, may have been already given. If you despise the present invitation, you may never be invited again. I beseech you, for the sake of your immortal souls, and for the sake of your God and Saviour who has shown you such abundant mercy, give yourselves to God this hour. You will then have a peace that passeth understanding, and a joy unspeakable and full of glory. If you remain faithful, your bliss shall continue as long as you live; it shall remain with you even when you come to die; and after death it shall grow into a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

THE SCRIPTURES.

The greatest and best of men have ever been the most diligent students of the Sacred Scriptures. Wesley, from an early period, resolved to be *homo unius libri*, a man of one book; and that one book the Bible. The Bible was the principal book that Richard Baxter studied, and it was, if I mistake not, the only book which he had in his dungeon, while he wrote his *Saints' Rest*. I believe it was Bunyan's only book when in gaol, while he wrote his Pilgrim's Progress. Luther, too, was a devoted admirer and lover of the Scriptures: it was the Scriptures that made him a reformer; and it was by the power of the Scriptures that he was instrumental in shaking to pieces the Popedom, and giving a new measure of light and liberty to the world. Richard Hooker was one of the best and ablest men that ever adorned the Established Church of England, and, on looking at his life, I found that he, too, was a great lover of the Scriptures, and that he made them his principal study. While he sought to enrich his capacious soul with the learning of philosophers, casuists, and schoolmen, and with such other learning as lay remote from the track of common studies, "He seemed *restless*," says his biographer, "in searching the scope and intention of God's spirit revealed to mankind in the Sacred Scriptures. And for the understanding of the Scriptures, he seemed to be assisted by the same spirit with which they were written. He that regardeth truth in the inward parts, made him to understand wisdom secretly. And the good man would often say, the Scriptures were not written to beget pride and disputations, and opposition to government; but moderation, and charity, and humility, and obedience, and peace, and piety in mankind; of which no man did ever repent himself upon his death-bed."

I was conversing with a very pious and understanding man lately, who is now not much less than seventy or eighty years of age, and he told me that at one period of his life he had, for a length of time, some years I believe, been almost if not altogether confined, in his reading, to the Sacred Scriptures, and that he did not recollect that he had ever got on so well in religion in any part of his youthful years, as during that period. I have no doubt but numbers have had a similar experience.

It would be wrong to confine our reading to the Scriptures, when we have other useful books at command; but there is a danger lest, in a multiplicity of human writings, the Book of God should be comparatively forgotten or neglected. And this, whenever it takes place, cannot fail to prove a great evil. It would be far better, if we must either cease to converse with God or cease to converse with men, that we should cease to converse with men. The utmost that men and the writings of men can contain, is but a few drops from the boundless ocean: but the Book of God is the ocean itself, and with God is the eternal and inexhaustible fountain from which that ocean was supplied. The greatest service that human writings can render us is to lead us to the oracles of God, and prepare us to receive their instructions.

We would not have any means of information neglected or undervalued which God has supplied; but we would, at the same time, have you to regard the Scriptures as the first and best of books, and we would have you to make them the principal subject of your studies. You will never be truly learned or wise,—you will never be well grounded in the faith, — you will never be "mighty in word and in deed before God," unless you be "mighty in the Scriptures." It is to lead you to the Scriptures,—it is to assist you to read the Scriptures with profit,—it is to lead you to revere and love the Scriptures next to God, and so to make you men of God, thoroughly furnished unto all good works, that we have commenced the publication of this work. If we may be so favoured by God, as to be rendered instrumental in accomplishing this object, and so in leading you to become a multitude of simple, decided, zealous, New Testamental Christians, we shall be satisfied.

THE INFLUENCE WHICH CHRISTIAN FAITH SHOULD HAVE ON OUR AFFECTIONS.

We recommend to our readers the following passage from Baxter's Life of Faith, on the influence that Christian faith ought to have upon our affections :—

"*Desire and use the creature as believers.* Interpret all things as they receive their meaning from the things *unseen:* understand them in no other sense. It is only *God* and the *life to come* that can tell you what is good or bad for you in the world. Take heed what you love. God is very jealous of our love. He sheds abroad his own love in our hearts, that our hearts may be fruitful in love to him. By love he commandeth love ; that we may suitably move towards him, and centre in him. He communicateth so much for the procuring from us a *little*, that we should endeavour to give him *all that little*, and shed none of it inordinately upon the creature by the way. Nothing is great, or greatly to be admired, while the great God is in sight. And it is unsuitable for *little things*, to be the objects of great affections, and for low matters to have high esteem. It is the corruption and folly of the mind, and the delusion of the affections, to exalt a shrub above a cedar, and magnify a molehill above a mountain ; to embrace a shadow or a phantom of felicity, which vanisheth into nothing the moment you bring it into the light. The creature, in itself, is *nothing*, and of no power. God is *All* and *Almighty:* and he that is *All*, should *have* all, and *command* all. I deny not but we may *love a friend*. One soul in two bodies, will have one mind, and will, and love. But as it is not the *body* of my friend that I love or converse with principally, but the *soul* ; so it is not the *person*, but *Christ in him*, or that of God which appeareth in him, that must be the principal object of our love. The man is mutable, therefore must be loved with a reserve. But God is unchangeable, and must be absolutely and unchangeably loved. That life is best that is likest heaven. There God will be All ; and yet even there it will be no dishonour or displeasure to the Deity, that the glorified humanity of Christ, and the New Jerusalem, and our holy society, are loved more dearly than we can love any creature here on earth. So here, God taketh not that affection as stolen from him, that is given to his servants for his sake, but accepts it as sent *to him by them*; Let the creature have it ; so God have it finally in and by the creature ; and then it is not so properly the creaure that hath it, as God. If you *choose*, and *love* your friends for God, you will *use* them for God : not flattering them, or desiring to be flattered by them ; but labouring to kindle in each other the holy flame which will aspire and mount, and know no bounds, till it reach the boundless element of love. You will not value them as friends who praise all you say and do, but those who kindly reprehend your errors and your faults. Not them that *call* you good, but them that would *make* you *better*. And you will let them know, that they can never be both friends and flatterers.

It is hard to love the imperfect creature, without mistakes, and inordinacy in our love. And therefore usually where we love most, we *sin* most: and our sin finds us out: and then we *suffer* most: and too much affection is the forerunner of much affliction; which would be much prevented, if faith might be the guide of love, and human love might be made divine; and all be referred to the things unseen, and animated by them. Love where you can never love too much; where you are sure to have no disappointments; where the only error is, that God hath not all; and the only grief, that we love no more.

Especially in the midst of your enticing pleasures, or enticing employments and profits in the world, foresee the end; do all in *faith*, which telleth you, "The time is short; it remaineth that both they that have wives, be as though they had none; and they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not; and they that use this world, as though they used it not: for the fashion of this world passeth away." 1 Cor. vii. 29, 30.

WHAT DO WE CALL OURSELVES. &c.

The following is from the pen of Richard Baxter. It was written in answer to a person who spoke of him as a Chief Heretic, and complained that he could not tell to what party he belonged, &c. There is a very considerable resemblance in many particulars between the times of Baxter and our own times, and I doubt not but that it will be both pleasant and profitable to learn what was the judgment of so great and so good a man on some of the questions that are at present agitating the minds of many of our readers. It will be pleasing also to those who are represented as heretics and ill-designing men, because they cannot subject their judgments and consciences to the will of any party, to find that while thus reproached for conscience sake, they are suffering no more than what has fallen to the lot of the most excellent of the earth. After answering certain vile charges brought by the persons referred to against the Puritans generally, he proceeds as follows:—

"And now I must speak to the accuser's speeches of myself. I thank you, sir, that you feigned no worse of me. If I am a leading heretic, why would not you vouchsafe to name that heresy which I have owned. I have given you large field-room, in near *eighty* books: and few men can so write, as that a willing man may not find some words which he is able to call heresy. 2. But seriously, do you not know my judgment? Will not about eighty books inform you (what are my sentiments?) How then can I help it? But you know not what party I am of, nor what to call me: I am sorrier for you in this than for myself; if you know not, I will tell you; I am a CHRISTIAN, a MERE CHRISTIAN, of no other religion; and the *church* that I am of is the *Christian Church.* But must you know what *sect* or *party* I am of? I am against all sects and dividing parties? But if any will call *mere Christians* by the name of a *party*, because they take up with *mere Christianity*, *Creed*, and *Scripture*, and will not be of any dividing or contentious sect, I am of that party which is so against parties? If the name CHRISTIAN be not enough, call me a CATHOLICK CHRISTIAN; not as that word signifieth an hereticating majority of bishops, but as it signifieth one that hath no religion but that which by Christ and the Apostles was left to the Catholick Church, or the body of Jesus Christ on earth.

"And now, sir, I am sorry that you are not content with mere Christianity, and to be a member of the Catholick Church, and hold the Communion of Saints, but that you must needs also be of a sect, and have some other name? And how shall I know that your sect is better than another? Were it not that the Papists are Sectaries and Schismaticks, damning most of Christ's body on earth, for not being subject to their Pope, I should not be so much against them. I find promises of salvation in the Scriptures to *believers*, that is, *Christians* as such, (if such sincerely) but none of salvation to men as *Papists*, *Diocesans*, *Grecians*, *Nestorians, Eutychians*, &c., I would say also, *nor as Protestants*, did I not take the religion called *Protestant* (a name which I am not fond of) to be nothing but *simple Christianity*, with opposition to Popery, and other such corruptions. And now you know your own designs; your tongue is your own, and who can control you, whatever you will call us? But I, and such others, call ourselves MERE CHRISTIANS, or CATHOLICK CHRISTIANS, against all sects and sectarian names, and haters both of true *Heresy, Schism*, and *proud, unrighteous, hereticating* and *anathematizing*. Psal. 4. *O ye sons of men, how long will ye turn my glory into shame? how long will ye love vanity, and seek after lying? But know that the Lord hath set apart him that is godly for himself*. Psal xii. 5. *Help, Lord, for the godly man ceaseth, for the faithful fail among the children of men*."

His remarks on the slanderous reports circulated respecting the Puritans generally, are also worthy of notice:—"Two crimes I have long ago heard the rabble charge on those whom they call *Puritans, Lying* and *Covetousness;* whereas near two thousand ministers are cast out, and suffer, which they could mostly escape, if they *durst* but lye: and, (as to covetousness) if I ask money for the poor, I can sooner get a pound from those called Puritans, than a shilling from others far richer than they.—Can I take any men to be other than malignant liars that revile such men as *Usher, Hall, Davenant, &c.*, or who would make me believe that such men as *Hildersham, Rogers, Ames*, and *Bradshaw*, were rogues and seditious rebels? Reader, believe not a word of any of the revilings or odious characters and stories, which any aspiring, worldly, factious clergyman writeth of such as are his adversaries. Lying is their too common language. Yea, if they do but once set themselves eagerly to seek preferment, I will never trust them, or take their words more. It hath been so of old; the same man that was a saint to his acquaintance, hath been described as wicked, or a devil by others. But the piety and honesty of God's servants is such a self-evidencing thing that pious and honest men that knew them, cannot believe their lying slanderers. And when Satan hath done his worst, the very *writings* of such men as *Calvin, Beza, Melancthon, Perkins, Hildersham, Ames, Usher, Davenant, Hall, &c.*, will not suffer men to believe their odious revilers. Even among Papists, when I read the works of *Bernard, Gerson, Kempis, Thaulerus, Sales*, and the lives of *Nerius, De Renti*, and others, I cannot believe him that would tell me they were wicked men.

"Alas, how little are most histories to be believed, where they prove not what they say. Who can believe such palpable railers as *Sympius* and others, who make the vulgar believe that *Luther* learned his religion of the Devil, and was killed by him,—that *Oecolampadius* was killed by the Devil, and that Bucer [another pious reformer] had his bowels pulled out, and cast about by the Devil,—that Calvin was a stigmatized sodomite and sensualist; that Beza died a Papist (who lived long after to write a confutation), and abundance such. When I have lived in intimate familiarity with holy mortified persons, from my childhood to the sixty-fifth year of my age, and known their integrity, notwithstanding their infirmities, and then read such histories as represent them as most odious, flagitious persons, I see it is not for nothing that some men are called *Diaboli*, (Devils,) in the Scripture, and the *Children of their Father the Devil*, who was from the beginning a *lying malignant murderer*."

"The Lord pardon and heal our common faultiness, and give better teachers to his churches when we are dead and gone, who will take warning by all our errors and miscarriages, especially to escape a *worldly spirit, pride, church tyranny, and schism*, and serving the world, the flesh, and the Devil, by pretence of authority from Christ."—*Baxter's Church History*.

THE LORD REIGNETH.

THERE is neither chance nor fate in the universe: the providence of God extends over all things. "*The Lord reigneth:*" "*His kingdom extendeth over all*." And this is our consolation. We know that while the world is under the control of God, all must be well. It is impossible that any thing should happen without his knowledge; and it is impossible that he should allow any thing to happen but what he can overrule for good. If the world were governed by chance, we could never be certain whether the good or the bad should be prosperous. Nor would the case be better if all things were governed by fate. In either case, the soul would become the prey of dark and intolerable anxieties. When troubles came upon us, we should sink in despair; we should not have a single plank on which hope might rest herself. But this is not the case. We are neither chained down by fate, nor left to be the sport of chance: we are in the hands of God. A great, a wise, a good, and an Almighty being, orders all the affairs of time. Whatever happens is under the direction and control of Heaven, and this is reason sufficient why I should be "careful for nothing, but in every thing, by prayer, and supplication, with thanksgiving, make my request known unto God." The followers of Christ may be afflicted and persecuted for the present; but they shall have rest in the end. For a time truth may be borne down, and error may roll on like a flood, bearing down all opposition; but it shall not be so for ever. "*The Lord reigneth:*" and whatever may be the state of things for the present, he will at length make the truth to triumph; and all iniquity shall hide its head. The enemies of his cause shall be covered with shame and confusion, while those who stood forth boldly against error and sin, and suffered reproach and persecution for the sake of Christ, shall stand forth as the favourites of Heaven, and be clothed with immortal glories.

ST. HERMAS ON THE POSSESSION OF RICHES.

[Hermas, saluted by St. Paul at the conclusion of the Epistle to the Romans, and consequently a contemporary of the Apostle, has left us, as is allowed by all antiquity, a work entitled "*The Shepherd.*" It is a kind of allegory, and though somewhat fanciful in its illustrations, it is nevertheless interesting, as presenting to us so early an opinion on various topics of faith and practice. Such an opinion is the following extract, and what must give increased interest to this abstract, is the fact mentioned therein, —that Hermas was one of those disciples, who, by obeying the command "Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth," had escaped the deceitfulness of riches. The reason for the conduct of the Primitive Christians in respect of wealth is here also clearly exhibited.]

"But what are the white and round stones, lady, which are not proper for the building of the Temple! She answering, said unto me, How long wilt thou continue foolish and without understanding; asking every thing, and discerning nothing? They are such as have faith indeed, but have withal the riches of this present world. When, therefore, any troubles arise, for the sake of their riches and traffic they deny the Lord. I answering, said unto her, when therefore will they be profitable to the Lord? When their riches shall be hewn away, says she, in which they take delight, then they will be profitable unto the Lord for his building. For as a round stone, unless it be hewn away, and cast something off its bulk, cannot be made square; so they who are rich in this world, unless their riches be pared off, cannot be made profitable unto the Lord. Learn this from thy own experience: when thou wert rich thou wert unprofitable, but now thou art profitable, and fit for the life which thou hast undertaken; for thou also wert one of those stones."—*Book* 1. *vis. i. sec.* 6.

When Hooker was called on to give his judgment respecting a severe and violent work published by an adversary, he simply replied, "All that I mean to say is but this: there will come a time, when three words uttered in charity and meekness shall receive a far more blessed reward than three thousand volumes written with disdainful sharpness of wit. But the manner of men's writings," added he, "must not alienate our hearts from the truth, if it appear they have the truth."

Mrs. Cecil.—"My first convictions on the subject of religion, says the late Rev. R. Cecil, were confirmed by observing that really religious persons had some solid happiness among them, which I felt the vanities of the world could not give. I shall never forget standing by the bed-side of my sick mother. "Are not you afraid to die?" I asked. "No." "No! Why does the uncertainty of another state give you no concern?" "Because God has said, 'Fear not; when thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee.' 'Let me die the death of the righteous.'"

A Young Man.—"The Rev. Thos. Doolittle, at one time, having finished prayer, looked round upon the congregation, and observing a young man, who had just been put into one of the pews, very uneasy in his situation, adopted the following singular expedient to detain him. Turning to one of the members of his church, who sat in the gallery, he asked him this question aloud, "Brother, do you repent of coming to Christ?" "No, sir," he replied, "I never was happy till I came; I only repent that I did not come to him sooner." The minister then turned to the opposite gallery, and addressed himself to an aged member in the same manner, "Brother, do you repent of coming to Christ?" "No, sir," said he, "I have known the Lord from my youth upwards." He then looked down upon the young man, whose attention was fully engaged, and, fixing his eyes upon him, said, "Young man, are you willing to come to Christ?" This unexpected address from the pulpit, exciting the observation of all the people, so greatly affected him, that he sat down and concealed his face. The person who sat next him encouraged him to rise and answer the question. The minister repeated, "Young man, are you willing to come to Christ?" With a tremulous voice he replied, "yes, sir." "But when, sir?" added the minister in a solemn and loud tone. He mildly answered, "now, sir," "then stay," said he, "and learn the word of God, which you will find in 2 Cor. vi. 2: 'Behold, now is the accepted time, behold now is the day of salvation.'" By this sermon, he was greatly affected, and came into the vestry, after the service, bathed in tears. The reluctance to stay, which he had discovered, was occasioned by the strict injunctions of his father, who threatened, that if he went to hear such preachers, he would turn him out of doors. Having now heard the Gospel, and being unable to conceal the feelings of his mind, he was afraid to meet his father. The minister sat down and wrote an affectionate letter to him, which had so good an effect, that both father and mother came to hear for themselves. They were both brought to a knowledge of the truth; and, together with their son, were joyfully received into Christian communion."

J. Carter.—"The Rev. J. Carter, one of the Puritan ministers, once came unexpectedly behind a Christian of his acquaintance, who was busily occupied in his business as a tanner. He gave him a pleasant tap on the shoulder; the good man looked behind him, started, and said, "Sir, I am ashamed that you should find me thus." Mr Carter replied, "Let Christ, when he cometh, find me so doing." "What!" said the good man, "doing thus?" "Yes," said Mr Carter, "faithfully performing the duties of my calling."

Contentment.—Martin Luther. In the last will and testament of this eminent reformer, occurs the following remarkable passage:—"Lord God, I thank thee, for that thou hast been pleased to make me a poor and indigent man upon earth. I have neither house, nor land, nor money, to leave behind me. Thou hast given me wife and children, whom I now restore to thee. Lord, nourish, teach, and preserve them, as thou hast me." This has been the character of every true Reformer: there is no mention of any one being useful in reforming their age, who had not first risen above selfishness and worldly anxiety.

Whatsoever we do, if our own secret judgment consent not unto it as fit and good to be done, the doing of it to us is sin, although the thing itself be allowable. St. Paul's rule therefore generally is, "Let every man in his own mind be fully persuaded of that thing which he either alloweth or doeth." Rom. xiv. 5.—*Hooker.*

An African Slave.—"The first time the Rev. John Campbell went to Africa, visiting a meeting of slaves, and observing one among them who was particularly attentive, he was induced to make some inquiries respecting him. He was informed that this man had long been an eminent Christian; and that formerly he had endured much opposition from his employer on account of his religion. One day his master assured him that if he went to hear a missionary preach, he would flog him. The poor slave, with simplicity and Christian meekness, replied, "I must tell the Lord that." The saying so wrought on the mind of his master that he not only permitted him to go, but his other slaves with him; and after a while he and his wife were found there also."

A Man in India.—"The late W. Ward, of Serampore, once preached from Eccles. xi. 9: "Rejoice, Oh young man, in thy youth," &c. A notorious drunkard became, under this sermon, very seriously convinced of the importance of religion; and, with his wife, a short time afterwards, made a profession of religion. Previously to this, his master had used every means he could devise to persuade him to be sober, but in vain. After this change his employer wished to prevail on him not to attend the chapel; but he replied, "You know, Sir, what a drunkard I have been, and how often you have urged me in vain to leave it off; yet by going once to chapel, I was constrained to do that which none of your remonstrances were able to effect: therefore I wish to go again."

Remarks on a harsh Spirit and Manner of Preaching.—"I believe," says Cooper, "no man was ever scolded out of his sins. The heart, corrupt as it is, and because it is so, grows angry if it be not treated with some management and good manners, and scolds again. A surly mastiff will bear, perhaps, to be stroked, though he will growl even under that operation; but if you touch him roughly he will bite. There is no grace that the spirit of self can counterfeit with more success than religious zeal. A man thinks he is fighting for Christ, and he is fighting for his own notions. He thinks that he is skilfully searching the hearts of others, when he is only gratifying the malignity of his own, and charitably supposes his hearers destitute of all grace, that he may shine the more in his own eyes, by comparison. When he has performed this notable task, he wonders that they are not converted: "he has given it them soundly, and if they do not tremble, and confess that God is in him, of a truth, he gives them up as reprobate, incorrigible, and lost for ever." But a man that loves me, if he sees me in an error, will pity me, and endeavour calmly to convince me of it, and persuade me to forsake it. If he has great and good news to tell me, he will not do it angrily, and in much heat and discomposure of spirit. It is not, therefore, easy to conceive on what ground a minister can justify a conduct which only proves that he does not understand his errand. The absurdity of it would certainly strike him, if he were not himself deluded."

A Pious Daughter.—"Children, says the Rev. W. Jay, have conveyed religion to those from whom they ought to have derived it. "Well," said a mother one day weeping, her daughter being about to make a public profession of religion by going to the Lord's table, "I will resist no longer. How can I bear to see my dear child love and revere the Scriptures, while I never look into the Bible—to see her retire and seek God, while I never pray—to see her going to the Lord's table, while his death is nothing to me? Ah," said she to the minister who called to inform her of her daughter's intention, wiping her eyes, "Yes, sir, I know she is right, and I am wrong—I have seen her firm under reproach, and patient under provocation, and cheerful in all her sufferings. When, in her late illness, she was looking for dissolution, heaven stood in her face. O that I was as fit to die! I ought to have taught her, but I am sure she has taught me. How can I bear to see her joining the church of God, and leaving me behind—perhaps for ever?" From that hour she prayed in earnest, that the God of her child would be her God, and was soon seen walking with her in the way everlasting."

NOTICE OF T. ALLIN'S SECOND LETTER TO THE REV. J. BARKER.

The following notice of T. Allin's second letter to J. Barker, is from a friend with whom T. Allin frequently corresponded, previous to last Conference. The Editor has seen the letter of T. Allin, containing the passage so opposite to the declaration in the printed letter.—EDITOR.

It is with pain that we have to advert to the second letter just published by Mr. Allin. We shall, however, only notice what is contained in this letter relative to one subject, and even this one subject would not have been noticed, had it been merely a *matter of opinion*, and not an important *matter of fact*. In the 7th page of the letter abovementioned, Mr. Allin's words to Mr. Barker, are as follows, "To bring down odium on the Committee and their associates you unceasingly reiterate the cry that you had been tried and condemned in your absence, and that the leading officials in the Connexion came to the decision, that unless you could be induced to leave the body, you ought to be expelled. Repeatedly has this been denied, and proof challenged, but nothing beyond bold assertion has been given! *That assertion* I again meet with *unqualified denial*." Such is the printed declaration of Mr. Allin, the meaning of which cannot be misunderstood. It is evidently intended to produce the belief that the meeting at Manchester left the case of Mr. Barker as *free* to be *treated and disposed of by the Conference*, as though such meeting had never been held. In short, that that meeting neither *formed* nor *expressed* any opinion as to what the *approaching Conference* ought or ought not to do with him. Such appears to be the only construction which can naturally and fairly be put upon the printed words of Mr. Allin, which we have just given, and which words he now wishes to be received as containing the "truth and nothing but the the truth." We will now give Mr. Allin's words, *written with his own hand, only a few days after the Manchester meeting took place*, and which many will, no doubt, look upon as being entitled to as much credit as those already quoted. They are these,—"I ought to state that a meeting of the Committee and Connexional Officers has been held, *at which the unanimous opinion was*, that Mr. B., as an honest man, ought to leave a church of which he disapproves, but that if he will not do this, *it will be the duty of Conference to remove him*." Such is Mr. Allin's own deliberate statement respecting what was the "*unanimous opinion*" of the persons composing the Manchester Meeting. And this "*unanimous opinion*," observe, is here said to have been given, not as to what Mr. Barker had done, but what he ought to *do* himself, and not what *they*, but what the *Conference* ought to do with him,—"*The unanimous opinion was*," says he, "*that it will be the duty of Conference to remove him*." And yet, in the face of this statement, which his own hand had written—and written at a time when every thing which was said and done at that meeting must have been *perfectly fresh upon his memory;* we say, in the face of such a statement, he now denies, in the most "unqualified" manner, that *any thing* of that kind which he stated had been done, was done at all!

Here, then, we have two distinct and very conflicting representations from Mr. Allin himself, the one affirming and the other denying that the Manchester meeting had condemned J. Barker in his absence. We have his statement *before* the Conference, and we have his statement *after* the Conference; in fact, we have Allin against Allin. Previous to Conference he most distinctly gives it out as a fact, that without a dissentient voice the parties assembled at Manchester had decided that J. Barker ought either to leave the Connexion of his own accord, or be removed by the Conference; and now, when the Conference is over, he as distinctly denies that any thing of the kind occurred! It remains with him to inform us what we are to believe in this case: that is to say, Are we to believe that the fact, as stated by Mr. Allin on the 12th of last May, is true, viz., that the "unanimous opinion" of the meeting at Manchester was, that Mr Barker ought to be expelled; or are we to believe that no such "unanimous opinion" was ever expressed? Both the *one* and the *other* of these things, as we have seen, have been asserted by T. Allin, and therefore either the *one* or the *other* of them must be *untrue*, unless the *statement* of a fact, and the *denial* of that statement, are one and the same thing, and unless the most *contradictory* statements can be all true together.

Charity would forbid us to entertain the idea for a moment that Mr. Allin would wilfully misrepresent any fact in connection with the case in question, and yet, owing to forgetfulness or some other unaccountable influence, he has evidently been led to make the most opposite and conflicting statements relative to what was done at the Manchester meeting. And while we have it in his own hand writing, that the "unanimous opinion of that meeting was," that, if Mr Barker would not withdraw from the Connexion, "it would be the duty of Conference to remove him:" we have, in fact, *no less an authority than Mr. Allin himself*, in favour of every thing which has been said by Mr. Barker relative to the *pre-condemnation* of Mr. Barker in his absence, and in the absence of his friends at the meeting in Manchester.

We have a somewhat high opinion of Mr. Allin's sophistical ingenuity, having witnessed repeatedly the exercise of this kind of talent in his torturing J. Barker's words and writings, so as to make them suit his own purpose, however different from the author's meaning. But how he can set about making the attempt to prove black and white to be of the same complexion, or to reconcile himself with himself in this instance, surpasses our comprehension. His language is so plain both for and against, that he cannot even mystify the two conflicting statements, so as to extricate himself from the dilemma into which he has been brought. Had Mr. Allin's account of what was done at the Manchester Meeting, before Conference, been less minute, and only a general idea given of it, he might, perhaps, have succeeded in some measure in explaining it away; but having been so particular, there can be no pretension made that his meaning has been misunderstood. He says, first,—the Manchester Meeting was of opinion that J. Barker ought to resign. Second,—that if he did not resign, it would be the duty of the Conference to remove him. Third,—that the meeting was *unanimous* in this opinion. And, fourth,—that he makes this statement as a matter of duty. On the 12th of May, be it observed, and more than a fortnight previous to the Conference, "I ought," he says, "to state," &c. Now, we appeal to common sense and common candour, if there be a person living, sufficiently intelligent to be able to count twenty, who can possibly misapprehend the meaning of this communication of Mr. Allin. If it were written with a sunbeam it could not be plainer, that the Manchester Meeting—Mr. Allin himself, the convener of that meeting, and the proper person to record its acts, being the historian of its proceedings—both tried and condemned J. Barker; at least it condemned him, and if he was condemned without being tried, so much the worse. And yet Mr. Allin now denies it altogether;—that is, he denies what he himself had affirmed to be the fact a few days after the meeting had been held, and while every thing must have been in his recollection. And not to leave the matter half done, Mr. Allin proclaims "that assertion"—mark, reader, his own assertion, in his own hand-writing, with his own signature appended, "that assertion," Mr. Allin says, "I again meet with unqualified denial." Such is Mr. Allin's consistency. What can surpass it! Surely, after this exposure, he will tear out of his pamphlet the leaf containing the following passage:—"They [the meeting in Manchester] instituted no trial of you; they passed no *resolution* respecting you: they did not even pronounce on the questions, whether all that was stated was true; what was the amount of your guilt; or whether you could be brought to retrace your steps; but left them for the decision of Conference." Mr. Allin may after this go on to "deny" until his lungs and pen fail him; but if he should be so far infatuated as to persevere in his "unqualified denials," it will be without provoking any other feeling on our part than pity. We are, indeed, by this circumstance, as well as other parts of his conduct, strengthened in a conviction which has been upon our minds for some months—namely, that Mr. Allin has recently allowed his judgment, and memory, and the more estimable faculties of his nature, to be so far overcome by prejudice and exasperation against J. Barker, that, unless he speedily recover himself, it will be high time for his friends to interfere and prevent the injury which may otherwise occur, both to his own reputation and the cause of religion. A man who can affirm and deny the same thing, as he has done, can hardly be safe in his own keeping.

To show how reluctant we are to multiply observations of a controversial or personal nature, we forego animadverting on other things in Mr. Allin's letters, which are altogether incorrect as to facts, and so uncharitable in their spirit, that we feel it difficult to meddle with them, without being, as it were, contaminated by the contact. We therefore leave them; and are resolved that nothing but the most absolute necessity shall compel us to occupy the pages of the Christian Investigator with discussions so unworthy of it, and of the great objects which were contemplated in its establishment. We would not have said so much as we have said on this occasion, had it not been partly for the purpose of putting the reader on his guard against bold assertions, made under excitement and disappointment, by our adversaries; and we wish once for all, to declare that the instance of inconsistency which we have been obliged to exhibit in the present number, is only one among a hundred, which might be brought home to their authors. But what time and paper it would require to do all this! And if the existing misrepresentations were refuted, we might, after all our labour, be just where we began, inasmuch as parties who can bring themselves to originate one false rumour, will give birth, or currency, to ten, or fifty, or a thousand in succession, if necessary; and life itself would be too short to detect and overturn them. We will, therefore, by the help and blessing of our great Master, devote ourselves to another calling, and trust both for success and a gracious reward hereafter.

* * * *

[We cannot believe that either T. Allin or J. H. Robinson would write a wilful falsehood, but certainly, when men find themselves writing plain and absolute contradictions, and that within the compass of two or three months, it should make them speak on those matters with less assurance and with greater care.

We should ourselves have made a few remarks on the first and second letters of T. Allin, but we wish to have done with Conference affairs: the Christian Investigator and Evangelical Reformer, has other and nobler work. We are wishful to have entirely done with every thing that bears the slightest resemblance to personal controversy, or party strife. A most extensive door of general usefulness is opening before us; the encouragement our labours are receiving is beyond all we looked for; multitudes that feel no interest in party disputes, are wishful to help us in promoting the great and godlike objects for which this work was commenced; and we wish to act in a way that shall be worthy of the solemn responsibilities that rest upon us. The elucidation, the defence, and the inculcation of the great practical and renovating principles of the Gospel is our business, and to this alone would we devote the whole of our time and energies. As far as the general interests of truth shall require, we may bestow an occasional notice on other matters; but the simple, undivided object of the Christian Investigator, is to promote the improvement of the church, and the regeneration of the world. We wish the work to be Christ's *own*, got up and published purely for the furtherance of his interests in the world. We wish it to be, and, by the blessing of Heaven, we are resolved it shall be, a free, a mild, a loving, but a thorough-going advocate of every thing that is truly godlike, and a rich storehouse of wholesome unadulterated Christian truth: in short, just what we have described in the Prospectus. May that Great Being, who is the fountain of light and of love, favour us with his assistance, and render our imperfect labours successful in illuminating and regenerating a portion of his immortal creatures.

[EDITOR.]

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Our kind and highly-esteemed friend who refers to the article on page 29, entitled Extracts from Letters, will find satisfaction, perhaps, in the remarks accompanying the notice of *T. Allin's second Letter.*

A Friend from Halifax has kindly sent us an account of certain lectures delivered there, and wishes us to make a few remarks on the one on baptism. But if we should see it needful to publish any further observations on that subject, we should prefer, with our present views, publishing them in a separate pamphlet. But from all that we can learn, no further publication is yet required. We have read A. Scott's pamphlet, and G. Greenwell's, and we have received an account of G. B.'s lectures in reply to "Water Baptism," but "Water Baptism" seems to be as true as ever, and to be as good and complete an answer to what has been published *since* its publication, as to what had been published on the subject *before* its publication. All who profess to answer "Water Baptism," seem disposed to answer it by passing by its leading arguments, and dwelling on points that have little or nothing to do with the main question. And it is rather singular and truly lamentable, that all who profess to answer it, whether lecturers or writers, indulge more or less in unkind expressions. This ought not to be. Whichever be wrong in *opinion*, we ought all to be right in *temper*. We ought, however, to say, that A. Scott's pamphlet, though not all that it should be in respect to temper, is nevertheless a considerable improvement on some of his former pamphlets. We are glad of this: We hope we shall see still greater improvements. There will be some chance for truth, when controversies begin to be conducted in charity. What a pity that love should have so little to do in men's affairs. How strange, that men should ever shut out from all part in their controversies, the brightest, the loveliest, the kindest spirit in earth or in heaven. Let us hope that the time for disputing about religious matters, in an irreligious spirit, is passing away.

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A DISCOURSE.

"*A forgetful hearer.*"—James i. 25.

Forgetful hearers are very common; they may be found, I fear, in every congregation. The number of those who remember what they hear is very small indeed. Many of those who sit under the ministry of the word,—many even of those who profess to be the followers of Christ, never *try* to remember what they hear. They come to hear the preacher, and they are pleased to hear him; but as for keeping in memory that which is preached to them, it appears never to enter into their thoughts.

There are persons who have attended places of worship for ten or twenty years together, who are no wiser at present than they were at the beginning. There are many who, so far from carrying away from a place of worship the substance of the discourses which they hear, do not even recollect the texts of Scripture on which they are grounded.

This general habitual forgetfulness of the word, is a great evil. It is, in the first place, a great contempt of God. If men had that respect for God which they ought to have, they would listen to his word with the greatest attention, and treasure it up in their hearts with the greatest care. If I had been in company with the Queen, receiving a message from her, and in ten minutes after leaving her presence should have no recollection of what she had told me, I should be considered as treating the Queen with very great disrespect indeed. And if the Queen should hear of my conduct, I should never be likely to be entrusted by her with a message again. And yet this is the way in which God is dishonoured constantly by forgetful hearers.

Again; such forgetfulness is directly contrary to the divine command. God has commanded us over and over again to keep his words in our hearts continually. "And these words which I command thee this day," saith the Lord to his ancient people, "shall be in thine heart." "Ye shall lay them up in your heart and in your soul," saith the Lord again, "and bind them for a sign upon your hands, that they may be as frontlets between your eyes." The Redeemer urges us to take heed how we hear, and cautions us against letting the devil steal away what we hear from our hearts. The Apostle exhorts us to let the word of God *dwell* in us richly, in all wisdom; and in another place, when contrasting the word which was given to the Jews, and the word which was preached by Christ, he tells us that "we ought to give *the more earnest heed* to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip." The forgetful hearer therefore goes in direct opposition to the solemn warnings and injunctions of Heaven.

Again, forgetful hearers lose the benefits which the Gospel was intended to convey to their souls. The Gospel is of no use to him who only hears it to forget it. Hence the

Apostle Paul represents a remembrance of God's word as necessary to our salvation. His words are as follows: "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the Gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received,and wherein ye stand: by which also ye are saved, *if ye keep in memory that which I preached unto you.*" 1 Cor. xv. 1—2. The Redeemer also teaches us the same lesson in the parable of the sower. He compares the word which is heard by the forgetful hearer to seed which was sown by the way-side, which the fowls of the air carried away, leaving the ground all bare and unfruitful. The forgetful hearer, therefore, by allowing himself to be robbed of the word of life, allows himself to be robbed of every spiritual blessing. The word of God is the food of the soul; it is the milk which is to nourish the new-born babes, and the stronger meat as well, by which those are to be fed who are of riper years, and who have their spiritual senses exercised to distinguish between good and evil. But food cannot nourish us, unless it be retained for some time in the stomach. If it be cast up again as soon as it is taken, it leaves a person worse than before. And so with the milk of the word and the bread of life: if it is to do us any lasting good, we must retain it in our souls: we must not only mark and learn its lessons, but inwardly digest them. The Gospel is intended to sanctify us wholly: to wash us and make us spotless and unblameable before God: it is intended to make us like God, and to enable us to serve him in righteousness and true holiness all the days of our life. But it can only do this in proportion as it remains in our heart, as the leaven in the measures of meal. The Gospel is intended to prepare us for usefulness. It was not only designed to make us rich ourselves, but to make us the means of enriching others also. But if we neglect to lay up the precious treasure in our hearts, we can neither enrich others, nor have wherewith to supply our own necessities. The Gospel is intended to direct us in our way through this world to the worlds of blessedness above; but unless we retain it in our souls, we shall miss our way, and lose ourselves amidst the darkness of eternal night. The Gospel is intended to comfort us amidst the sorrows and trials of life; and it abounds with great and precious promises, and with bright and cheering views of the character and providence of God, and of the glories of the eternal world,exactly adapted thus to comfort us: but if those great and precious promises, and those bright and cheering views of God, and providence, and of the eternal world, are all forgotten by a person, how can they comfort him? A man that is a forgetful hearer can neither be wise, nor holy, nor useful, nor happy. He will be a blundering, unstable, and miserable creature all his life through, and an outcast from Heaven for ever.

It is to this wicked forgetfulness, in a great measure, that the present imperfect, inconsistent, and unhappy state of the church is to be attributed. If, when professors heard the word, they were to remember it, and allow it to exert its proper influence on their minds,they would, many of them, become new men. Their love to God, and their love to one another, would abound like an overflowing stream; their temperance, their humility, and their patience would show themselves in all their behaviour; and their labours in the cause of God, and for the welfare of the world, would be multiplied a hundred fold.

And there is no necessity for persons to be forgetful hearers. If all would use the proper means, and make a fair and thorough trial, there need not be a single forgetful hearer amongst us. There is no power of the soul perhaps that is more capable of improvement than the memory. No limits can be fixed to its capabilities of improvement. Some people seem to think that if persons were to be continually lodging in their memories something fresh, that their memories would at length be completely filled and crowded, so that there would be no room left for any more. They imagine a person's memory to be like a room, capable of holding just so much, and no more; and they suppose that every fresh thing stored up in the memory, leaves so much less room for further stores. But this is quite a mistaken notion; it is just the contrary with the memory. The more a man puts into his memory, the more his memory will hold. Instead of the fresh things which a man puts into his memory taking up part of the room, they make more room. A man may add to the stores of his memory for a thousand generations, and have more room in his soul for new acquisitions at the end than at the beginning.

In some, the power of memory has been quite prodigious. It is said of Themistocles, that he knew all the citizens of Athens, amounting to twenty thousand, and that when he met them he could salute them by name: and it is said of Cyrus, that he knew the name of every soldier in his vast army. Some persons have been known to report a long discourse after only once hearing it. There is on record, the account of a man who could repeat the whole contents of a newspaper; and of another, who could retain words that were dictated to him, without any connexion, to the amount of six thousand. A man mentioned by Seneca, after hearing a poet read a new poem, claimed it as his own; and, in proof of his claim, repeated the poem from beginning to end, which the author of it could not do. It is said of the late Dr. Leyden, that he could repeat correctly a long act of parliament, or any similar document, after having once read it. I have heard of a man that committed to memory the whole Bible from beginning to end: and I have heard of another that could repeat the whole of Homer's Iliad in the original Greek; and Augustine tells us that his friend Simplicius, could repeat all Virgil's poems, a work almost as large as the Bible. Thomas Walsh, from the account which John Wesley gives of him, appears not only to have carried in his memory the whole of the Bible, but to have been able to refer, without difficulty, to any passage that might be named. Beza, even at the age of four score years, could perfectly say by heart, in Greek, any chapter of Paul's Epistles.

Bishop Jewel had improved his memory, by diligent cultivation, to such a pitch, that he could readily repeat any thing that he wrote down, after once reading it over. He usually began to commit his sermons to heart, when the bell began to ring; and had them perfectly at command by the time the bell ceased. And what he learned he kept so firmly, that he used to say, That if he had to deliver a speech, which he had previously studied, before a thousand hearers, shouting or fighting all the while, yet he could still say what he had provided. I have no idea that such prodigious powers of memory are within the reach of every one, but all who are blessed with common powers, might improve their memories very considerably; and many might acquire such powers, if they were to try, as would cause them to be looked upon as a kind of miracles. The aged would not be able to improve in this respect so much as the young, and even among the young there might be a difference; but all could do something; and what we wish is, that every one should make an effort, and improve his memory in the things of God as much as possible.

I have myself known persons, who have, by long-continued efforts, improved their memories very greatly. In one of the large towns of England in which I once resided for a time, there was a woman who was a draper. She had a very extensive business, but sold all, or nearly all, on credit, and received the money by weekly or fortnightly instalments, a shilling or two at a time. I should think that at the time I knew this woman, she had not less than five hundred customers of this description. And she could not write a single figure, nor read a single word; so that she could keep no books. And yet I believe that woman never forgot a debt, and I question whether she ever forgot a payment. And she had no peculiar powers of memory naturally, that ever I heard of: her compass and correctness of memory were, apparently, the result of cultivation. She had but a very few customers, when she began at first, and the number increased gradually. She had besides an *interest* in remembering her customers and their accounts; for she could not forget a customer, without risking so much money; and money had no small share of her affections. Why should not all, especially all who begin to be religious in early life, improve their memories in spiritual things, as much as this woman improved her's in earthly things? There is nothing impossible in it. I know a man who, at one period of his life, had scarcely any memory at all in religious matters, who at present has, in some respects, as good a memory as almost any one. I have heard him say, that at one time of his life he could not recollect a single sentence of a sermon, do what he would. Many a time he tried to carry away from the chapel just one sentence, but he could not do it. Sometimes he would say to himself, Well, I will remember the *next* sentence, if it be possible; and he tried as well as he was able; but in less than five minutes it was gone, and his mind was as empty as before. And so in reading. When he closed his book, he had no more idea of what he had been reading generally, than if the book had been made up of nothing but blank pages. And this was the case with him for a length of time. But he was determined to improve, if it were possible, and he *did* improve. If he were to hear a good sermon now, it would be as difficult for him to forget it, as it would have been once to remember it. And if he reads a book on a subject in which he feels a lively interest, he can recollect the whole drift of the writer's argument, and the general substance of his observations. And I cannot believe, if professors of religion would do their duty in this matter, but that multitudes of them, if not nearly all, might, by the blessing of heaven, improve their powers of memory in this way. Only let them set about the work, and go forward with a determined persevering spirit, and I have not the least doubt but they will succeed. I may give advice how to proceed in this matter in the next number.

One hour, one minute, of genuine humiliation before God, one tear of gracious contrition for sin, one groan unutterable of the spirit of adoption, is of more value in the sight of God than the most splendid round of formalities.—*Mason, of New York.*

THE CHRISTIAN AND THE INFIDEL IN THE HOUR OF DANGER.

[*Extracted from a Work entitled "Travels through the United Kingdom, in promoting the cause of Peace on Earth, and Good-will towards Men; by GEO. PILKINGTON, late Captain, Corps of Royal Engineers.*]

In order to travel to Wetherby as economically as possible, I concluded to go by the steam-boat from London to Hull, and, previous to my departure, had made the necessary arrangements for so doing; but, as the day approached, I had a foreboding, (in consequence of a dream,) that I should have a dangerous passage. This worked so strongly on my mind, that I determined to go by land, but could not feel easy under the change of purpose, as the monitor seemed to say in my heart, that my fears were turning me from some approaching duty. After much exercise of mind, under a restless conscience, I, at length, found peace in returning to my original determination.

On the morning of the 7th, my wife and children, in ignorance of this impression upon my mind, accompanied me to the wharf; and, when on board the steamer, she made an earnest request, that I would go in the best cabin, instead of the forecastle, urging that she should be easier in her mind if I did so. This was but little to give up to one who so zealously holds up my hands in all my engagements, and, without whose free consent, I could not, in all probability, have undertaken the task. Therefore, I agreed to her proposal; and, having booked my place, we took leave of each other.

Notwithstanding the beautiful appearance of the morning, I could not divest myself of the feeling that there was danger of some sort before me; we however floated along the Thames favoured by the wind and tide, and refreshed by all the smiling beauties of nature, as the sun, with varied rays, played upon the banks and the neighbouring hills.

At dinner, a stranger who sat beside me, observed that I did not eat *meat;* and a person opposite to me, finding it was not in consequence of any indisposition, inquired, if I had any conscientious scruple against eating flesh?—I explained that I acted only on a principle of self-denial. This produced a religious conversation, in which my neighbour made some remarks of a sceptical character; and occasionally spoke of Mr. Owen's system of philosophy, as if he believed in it. In my replies, I took care to illustrate the essential doctrines of Christianity; but, in opposition, he justified his doubtings by reflecting on the conduct of the preachers, and the general habits of their flocks, declaring that he believed they did nothing without some interested motive. I answered his argument by shewing him one of my bills, on which he observed the words, "not the agent of any society"—"No collection," and he confessed there appeared to be no sinister motive *there*. I then asked him:

"How could you have known my motive if I had not shown you my bills?"

"That would have been impossible."

"Nevertheless, you included me in your general condemnation of Christians."

"I did not mean to say that there may not be a few exceptions."

"How can you tell how many?—May not every individual at the table be as disinterestedly engaged as I am, for aught that you know?"

"Certainly."

"Then you see the wisdom of Christ, who tells us, 'judge not.'"

About eight o'clock, p.m., being in the English Channel, the wind began to blow very hard from the southward, and, shortly afterwards, I lay down for the night on the upper end of the settee which extended round the side and end of the saloon. My head was in the corner under the stern windows, and my body in the fore and aft direction, so that my feet were at the head of the unbeliever, who occupied the next length of the running couch. I soon fell asleep; but about midnight, was awoke by a tremendous crash on deck. On raising my head, I observed that all the cabin passengers had already made their way to the door, through which the crowd was impetuously rushing, whilst, in the rear, the *sceptic* strove manfully to escape also: but whither?—To dumb Philosophy? "God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not."

I, under the shadow of the Almighty wing, was favoured to experience the power of his promise:—"Thou shalt not be afraid of the terror by night;" and conceiving that I could be of no use on deck, (whither I supposed the whole party had fled,) I contentedly laid my head upon my pillow, whilst this ungodly man now felt the effect of the woe which is unto him that striveth against his Maker.

I could not sleep; but, as a lighted lamp was suspended from the deck, I observed the movements of the passengers, and, amongst the rest, that of my new acquaintance, who seemed to be so terrified that, in useless and restless anxiety, he now ran to the cabin door, then to the sleeping berths, holding, as well as he could, by the table and other fixtures. In the meantime, having been twice pitched off my couch, I therefore changed my berth to the *end* settee, so that, being athwartship, I could not be thrown, as, at each roll of the vessel, I should be on my head or my heels.—Having attracted his attention, by thus changing my position, he immediately worked his way to my couch; and, reclining on that which I had just vacated, so that his head and mine were in the same corner, he, in an agony of fear, of which I had hitherto formed no adequate idea, exclaimed—

"Oh! what a dreadful night—the waves are higher than the deck."

Whilst he yet spoke, one of them broke over the vessel, with a heavy clash fell upon the deck, and like the rush of many waters swept its way into its native element. Loud and fearful as was the noise, it did not drown the voice of the despairing sinner, for, in the midst of all, he cried with a terrific gutteral tone, as if death personified had already grasped him for his prey.

"Ah! I am afraid to die!"

"Ah, my friend!—this is the time when the Christian feels the value of his religion."

"I never felt the terror of death before."

"'He that believeth on me,

though he were dead, yet shall he live,' is the promise of our Lord, and such as, through faith, *possess resignation to his will*, are prepared to go hence or to remain; so that, when the storm comes, they are helped to feel the power of the words, 'thy will, Father, not mine be done.'"

"Oh!" exclaimed he, "what it is to be a Christian!—I now see its value: nothing but that divine principle could produce such calmness in this dangerous situation.—But [as if excusing himself for being so alarmed] I have a wife and three children."

"And I have a wife and five children; but my Father says, 'Leave your fatherless children, I will keep them alive, and let your widows trust in me.'"

"Ah! but what can I do?—I am not fit to die."

"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved!—His doctrines are, 'Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.' Repentance is completed in three parts—sorrow for the past—a determination, with the Lord's help, never to do those things whereof you are now ashamed—and a resolve to undo the evil as far as in you lieth."

"I am indeed sorry for my past offences, and no longer desire to continue therein; but I cannot undo the evil I have done.—Surely, I should do some works worthy of a follower of Christ, before I can be received."

"You are justified by faith and not by works, lest you, or any man, should boast. What, if the vessel were to sink with us, and in half an hour you were food for sharks! Where then would be the time for works?—Now is the accepted time—even now may you be justified if you have faith to believe that so much mercy is to be obtained in such a simple way, as repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ."

"I would gladly do so, but I fear that my repentance is not sincere; for I have heard of many who, in the hour of the terror of death, repented, and again turned to their unbelief."

"I know that such lamentable occurrences have happened, but it does not follow that their repentance was, at the moment, insincere. They might in many, if not all, instances, have been backsliders, which, I trust, will not be your case!"—He was silent for some time, as if he had forgotten the danger he so much dreaded; and at length said:—

"You have laboured much in the cause of religion, but be assured that you have now turned one poor soul to Christ." Then bursting into tears, he threw his head upon my pillow and wept.

I could say no more,—the tears were flowing down my cheeks—my soul was turned to Him who was with me, offering praise and thanksgiving, that that peace of heaven should have been observed in me by one who so much required a sign; and my heart inwardly prayed, saying:—

"Father, I have been accustomed to storms, battlefields, and bold enterprises; is it then hardihood engendered by habit, or is it faith in thy promises that makes me appear thus calm in the midst of these jarring elements. Teach me, Father, to know my own heart."

He again referred to my calmness and fortitude, and no wonder, for I was indeed absent in prayer: but, hearing this call of poverty, I turned to him, and said:—

"Yes, my friend!—I may, indeed, be calm, since I am assured that every hair of my head is numbered; and although I have a wife and five children, yet I feel satisfied that, if I were now taken, it would be for the benefit of their souls; and that he who called me hence to some higher sphere of action, would provide for the widow and the orphans."

The recollection of the monitions of the Spirit which, contrary to my own understanding, led me to take a passage in the steamer to Hull, instead of going by the coach, induced me now to believe, that the purpose of my mission to this vessel was accomplished. My mind was, therefore, led to believe that all danger was at an end; and this expectation was strengthened when my attention was turned to the storm, which appeared to have abated. I then said to him, "I have faith to believe that we shall arrive safely in Hull, and that this has been the means adopted to bring you to Christ; but I warn you, that, if you turn a deaf ear to the requisitions of your God, your trials will be twofold more severe."

"Henceforth," said he, "I desire to devote myself to God, but you must not leave me, until you have introduced me to the Lord's people. You must know where they are to be found; I never saw a Christian before."

"Our heavenly Father says: 'Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils.' He will be your teacher—He your shepherd, and you shall not want," &c.

We arrived in Hull on the following morning, when I gave him one of my publications, entitled, "The Doctrine of Particular Providence." This he immediately commenced reading, and as we remained one night at Hull, and travelled together by the steamer to Selby, and from thence by train to Leeds, I had the opportunity of observing how steadfastly he perused it. Having read it through, he exclaimed: "If I had not known so much of you, I could not have believed the statement of the Lord's dealing with you, as therein detailed; but, now, I believe every word." He promised to attend my lecture at Leeds, but being at the time laid up with a severe attack of cold, the effect of the sea voyage, he was prevented.

It is remarkable that, after I had felt it a duty to go in the steam-boat, my wife should have prevailed on me, against my own inclination, to go in the after-cabin. On the whole, I am more and more convinced that our heavenly Father does most perceptibly lead us by the monitions of his Holy Spirit, occasionally intimating to each of his children, such portions of his designs, as may be connected with the particular gift and office to which he graciously appoints them.

The following beautiful and appropriate lines are from the Pen of Addison.

How are Thy servants blest, O Lord?
  How sure is their defence!
Eternal wisdom is their guide,
  Their help Omnipotence.

In foreign realms, and lands remote,
  Supported by Thy care;
Through burning climes I pass'd unhurt,
  And breathed in tainted air.

Thy mercy sweetened every soil,
  Made every region please,
The hoary Alpine hills it warm'd,
  And smooth'd the Tyrrhene seas.

Think, O my soul! devoutly think,
  How, with affrighted eyes,
Thou saw'st the wide, extended deep,
  In all its horrors, rise.

Confusion dwelt in ev'ry face,
  And fear in every heart,
When waves on waves, and gulphs on gulphs,
  O'ercame the pilot's art.

Yet, then, from all my griefs, O Lord,
  Thy mercy set me free,
Whilst in the confidence of prayer,
  My soul took hold on Thee.

For though in dreadful whirls we hung,
  High on the broken wave,
I knew Thou wert not slow to hear,
  Nor impotent to save.

The storm was laid, the wind retir'd,
  Obedient to Thy will;
The sea that roar'd at Thy command,
  At Thy command was still.

In midst of dangers, fears, and death,
  Thy goodness I'll adore;
And praise Thee for Thy mercies past,
  And humbly hope for more.

My life, if Thou preserv'st my life,
  Thy sacrifice shall be;
And death, if death must be my doom,
  Shall join my soul to Thee.

INVESTIGATION. ART. 3.

Is the Christian System—the System of Means and Agencies developed in the New Testament, for promoting Christianity,—indeed efficient for the Conversion of the World?

THE conclusion of our last inquiry left us rejoicing and exulting in the contemplation of a renewed and happy world. And we are justified in this our joy and exultation. Indeed, *obligation* in this respect, is laid upon us,—for, with express reference to this renovation of our world, it is written, "Be ye glad and rejoice for ever in the thing which I create, for behold I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy."

Under the influence of this reasonable joy, we expressed a solemnly renewed determination to devote our energies to those pursuits and labours which are most calculated to hasten this object of our intense desire.—Now, this excites an inquiry as to ways and means. Can we do much to hasten—can we do *anything* to hasten it? *Is the Christian system—the system of means and agencies de-*

veloped in the New Testament for promoting Christianity—indeed efficient for the conversion of the world?

A correct decision of this question will be a great advantage. If these means and agencies *are* thus efficient, we have an enduring ground for hope and consolation, even amidst the host of gigantic obstacles to truth which exist around us. And even if they are *not* efficient, we shall, by ascertaining the fact, be delivered from enthusiasm; we shall then no longer seek an end by the employment of insufficient means.

That portion of the Christian public which professes an expectation of the ultimate conversion of the world to holiness and peace, is divided as to our present question. It is held by some, that human instrumentality, under the divine blessing, is efficient, and is destined to effect the change. Others hold the contrary, and maintain that special interference by the Almighty will be the only thing capable of destroying evil, and establishing truth and righteousness in the world. This special interference is generally understood to be a second personal advent of the Messiah, who, it is supposed will, in person, exert his power, and *forcibly* subdue the nations to himself. Or, in other words, on one hand it is held, that human instrumentality will be the *grand* and *chief* means, and on the other, that some special and direct exercise of divine power must and will accomplish *most* of the work.*

Let us then attempt to ascertain what is the truth. Our question is, "Is the Christian system *efficient?*" and we have hitherto used these words as synonymous with "Will the Christian system *be the means?*"

Do the Scriptures afford us explicit information, as to what kind of agency will be employed by the Almighty in the subjugation of the world to himself?

We think the Scriptures do afford us this information. We have "searched the Scriptures" on this head, and we now present to our readers the result. We are convinced that, whilst the Bible teaches that the renovation of the world shall be *consummated* by signal displays of divine power, in the destruction of such as obstinately resist the proferred religion of the Messiah, it does still clearly show that human instrumentality will be THE MEANS,—the *chief*,—the *grand means* of converting the nations.

It will be unnecessary, and our space would not allow us, to give the whole series of passages by which this position might be established. We recommend our readers to go through the Scriptures for themselves, and consider all those passages which bear upon this question, comparing "spiritual things with spiritual." We must declare that *we* have, hitherto, had abundant cause to rejoice in having undertaken this *Investigation*. It has been already a source of abundant consolation to us. But we must at present content ourselves with a brief selection from the evidence which the Bible affords. And

1st. We think our position may be gathered from the second Psalm, where, in connection with a prophecy which declares that the "uttermost parts of the earth" shall become the possession of the Messiah, the "kings and judges of the earth" are exhorted, "Be wise, *therefore*," to "serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling," and to "kiss the Son lest he be angry, and they perish from the way." A plain intimation this, that obstinate rejecters of the truth, and those only, shall be destroyed when the Messiah's kingdom is universally erected.

2nd. In Isaiah, chap. 11th, it is predicted "they shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain," and the cause of their universal innocence is declared as follows:—"FOR the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." Yet in connection with this prophecy, it is also said of the Messiah, that "with the breath of his lips he shall *slay the wicked.*" Now, supposing that these concluding words, "slay the wicked," are to be literally understood, it is still pretty evident that the progress of the "knowledge of the Lord," and not the infliction of his judgments, is here regarded as the *chief* cause of the predicted reign of peace. See the tenor of the whole passage.

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* We prefer the latter form of the question, because we believe that those who hold the former opinion, will generally admit that some portion of the glorious change will be effected by *judgments*, though they very rarely express this. And we believe that those who hold the latter opinion, or who, at least, seem to set human instrumentality out of the question, and who *generally speak* of special interference only as the efficient and destined means, will generally allow that human agency may and will have *some* share in the work.

3rd. But our next extract puts the matter beyond dispute. In the 25th chapter of the same book, it is written of the church, "In this mountain shall the Lord of Hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees, well refined. And he will *destroy* in this mountain *the face of the covering that is cast over all people*, and *the vail that is spread over all nations.*" Verses 6 and 7. This surely intimates the conversion of the nations of the world generally, *by the removal of ignorance and delusion from* them; though allusion is apparently made in subsequent verses of this chapter, also to the destruction of the opponents of truth.

4th. Again, in the 60th chapter, the diffusion of *light*, and the *conversion* of the nations as a consequence, is declared in the most clear and convincing language. "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And *the Gentiles shall come to thy light*, and *kings to the brightness of thy rising.* Lift up thine eyes and see: *all they gather themselves together, they come to thee:* thy sons shall come from afar, and thy daughters shall be nursed at thy side. Then shalt thou see, and flow together, and thine heart shall fear, and be enlarged, because *the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee...*Who are these that fly as a cloud and as doves to their windows?" Is. lx. 1 to 5 and 8. We can conceive nothing more satisfactory, as to the agency by which, *chiefly*, the world shall be converted, than this beautiful description of the glory and influence of the church. But in this chapter also, *judgments* are spoken of as completing the conquest. In verses following those we have just given, the Prophet proceeds thus, "Therefore thy gates shall be open continually; they shall not be shut day nor night; that men may bring unto thee the forces of the Gentiles, and that their kings may be brought. For *the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish, yea those nations shall be utterly wasted.*" Verses 11 and 12. Still, however, "the Gentiles" generally "shall *come*," attracted by the "light of the church: by the brightness of its rising," for the glory of the Lord shall arise upon it. Still the "abundance of the sea shall be converted," the "forces of the Gentiles shall come" unto it. Yea, they shall "fly as a cloud, and as doves to their windows," because "the Lord shall arise upon it, and *his glory shall be seen* upon" his church.

5th. The next two chapters also afford us important testimony. "For *as the earth bringeth forth her bud*, and *as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth*, so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to *spring forth before* all nations." Is. lxi. 11. And this assurance apparently causes the Prophet to exclaim in the next verse, "For Zion's sake I will not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth. And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness; and all kings thy glory." Chap. lxii. 1, 2. These verses surely do not teach that *force* will be *the* instrument of the world's conversion. No! "Righteousness and praise shall *spring forth* before all nations," as luxuriantly, progressively, and peacefully, "as the earth bringeth forth her bud." The "righteousness thereof (of Zion) shall go forth (before 'the Gentiles,' and before 'all kings') as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth," and, in the language of a subsequent verse, "as a young man marrieth a virgin, so shall thy sons marry thee." This is not union as the result of terror at any rate.

6th. The last chapter also must not be passed over. And it is the more important because it furnishes those of our Christian brethren who, as we said in our introductory article, are giving up all expectation of the conversion of the world by ordinary means, with what they regard as one of the strongest proofs that an opposite agency must effect it. We will give the verses that are quoted on both sides of the question. We, in support of *our* position, find the Prophet speaking as follows, "Thus, saith the LORD, Behold I will extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream. Then shall ye suck, ye shall be borne upon her sides, and be dandled upon her knees." Surely this implies winning by love and loveliness, and not subjugation by terror and punishment. But our brethren, who differ from us in opinion, adduce several verses which follow this quotation. One of them is as follows:—"For by fire and by his sword, will the LORD plead with all flesh: and the slain of the LORD shall be many." Now, when this verse is considered apart, it does certainly appear to favour the opinion of our millenarian brethren and of others. But we must not set the Scripture against itself. We must rather strive to harmonise apparent contradictions. And in this case we think the task is not difficult. Only two verses previous to our brethren's quotation, we find what must be used in explanation of the sentence. "The hand of the LORD shall be known towards his servants, and *his indignation towards his enemies.*" Thus, then, though the slain of the Lord's *enemies,* shall be "many," and though this slaughter shall "plead" for the Lord with all flesh, and shall consequently hasten the consummation of the truth; we may still believe that Zion's extension will be effected chiefly by peaceful means. "For thus saith the Lord, I will extend peace to her *like* a *river*, and the glory of the Gentiles *like a flowing stream.*" Is. lxvi. 12.

But we must hasten to conclude this part of our inquiry. We will only give two or three additional quotations, all of which shall be, not from the Old Testament, but from the New.

7th. We have two parables, from our LORD's own lips, which are apparently designed to convey the very information after which we seek. We allude to those of the "leaven," and the "grain of mustard seed." In the former, the "whole lump" into which the leaven was thrown, is gradually "leavened." And unto this progressive, *pervading* process, our LORD likens the establishment of the kingdom of heaven on earth. The grain of mustard seed also *waxes* a great tree, and the fowls are *attracted* by the protection its branches afford. Such then is the way in which the nations shall be attracted and won over to the truth. This view is also confirmed by other metaphorical expressions which are applied to the church, and to Christians. The church is "a city set upon a hill," and the Christians are "the light of the world," and "the salt of the earth." All these, we think, indicate very clearly the kind of agency which is destined to convert the world.

8th. The allusion made by St. Paul to the temporary casting away of the Jewish nation, and to the consequent salvation of the Gentiles, also, is to our question. "Through their fall salvation is come to the Gentiles *to provoke them to jealousy.*" Now, how are the Jews to be thus provoked to jealousy? We think, manifestly, by the reception of this proferred salvation by the Gentiles, yea, by the *coming in* of the "fulness of the Gentiles." Then shall the "blindness" be removed from the Jews also, and "all Israel shall be *saved.*" We can explain this phraseology of nothing but a voluntary submission of both Gentiles and Jews, generally, to Christ, "in the day of his power."

Lastly. The Book of Revelation, also, confirms our position. For, it is when the Devil is bound, and no longer deceives the nations, that this thousand years commence. Delusion is removed, and the nations of this world, seeing the truth, "become the kingdoms of our God and of Christ." And it is *then*, we believe, that "the everlasting gospel" is *preached* "unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and people." And this view does not oppose those numerous declarations of judgment and destruction, which are predicted in this book, against the *enemies* and *opponents* of the truth.

For we maintain, not that there shall be no obstinate and irreclaimable individuals *or nations*, nor that there shall be no display of retributive vengeance, but merely, that the world *generally* shall be "willing," in the day of the Messiah's and his Church's "power."

We have now given our answer to the question before us; and are consequently prepared for the next of the proposed series. Indeed, *it* also is, in effect, decided; for it was dependent, to a great extent, upon the previous one. We must, of course, conclude, that if the ordinary means of promoting Christianity be generally efficient, (and this, we submit, has been proved by the fact, that they are declared in the Scriptures to be *the destined* means) no other means *need* be generally employed. We conclude further, therefore, that there is no *need* for such an event as a second personal, premillenial advent of Christ. Here we must join issue with our dear, and highly-esteemed *Millenarian* brethren. We call their attention especially to our previous quotations, and to the remarks we have made thereon. We ask them to cast away those discouraging views of the present state of the Church and the world, which are, we believe, a chief ground of their millenarian sentiments. We invite them to rejoice with us in the contemplation of the predicted *re-invigoration* of the Christian Church. We are by no means disposed, after considerations such as we have just submitted, to take that gloomy and desponding view of our Zion, which one of *their* writers has expressed in the following words:

"I might say more, and show a yet further necessity for the Lord's coming to precede his kingdom,—namely, passing from the enemy, and anti-Christian, to the contemplation of the church of Christ: the state of it, I do not hesitate to say, is such, that nothing short of the Lord's return of his presence and his power—could place it in a position to make it competent for the work it aspires to at present: that, to speak of nothing else, nothing short of a second revelation from heaven, could re-unite it, and heal its innumerable disorders and divisions—rent, as is the body of Christ, into hundreds of fractional parts, and every day fresh divisions arising."—*Sermons on the Second Advent, by the Rev. W. Burgh, A.B.*

We *do* hesitate to make this strong, and, to our minds, bold assertion. We dare not say, and we rejoice to believe that no Scripture indicates, that the evils existing in the Christian Church, are irremedible by the ordinary means. Nay, we believe the contrary. We believe they may, and will be, remedied. We do expect that our Christian Zion shall yet once more "awake, and put on her beautiful garments," and that from that awaking she shall "put on (once more) her strength." Yea, and that this shall be accomplished, not by the personal appearance of the humanity of our Lord, but even, as it is written, because "*the glory* of the Lord shall arise upon it;" because his "glory shall be seen upon it."

But our brethren tell us that the voice of prophecy declares this personal, pre-millenial advent. And the passage on which they lay much, and perhaps most, stress, is Dan. vii. 13—14. "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of Man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him." Now, here, say our brethren, is a clear testimony that the second coming of the Messiah takes place before, and in order to the conversion of the nations; and that he comes in person to receive the kingdom. But let us ask one question of them. Where is it that the Messiah is here said to *come to*? To our earth? To Jerusalem? No! here we conceive lies our brethren's mistake. The Messiah is said to come "to the Ancient of days;" and "they brought him near before Him." The passage is manifestly nothing more than a mystical or metaphorical declaration of the committal, by God the Father, into the hands of the Son, of that "everlasting dominion," which had been promised. The whole transaction is an heavenly, not an earthly one. And we believe the other passages usually adduced in support of the same side of the question, will be found, on strict examination, equally inconclusive. We cannot, however, notice them now. Should the Lord permit, on a future occasion, and in a separate article, we may enter more fully into this question. Our Millenarian brethren deprive themselves of the glorious prospect, which we think the volume of prophecy opens clearly before them. They are *worthy* of more cheering expectations than those on which they seem almost constantly to meditate. And their position confers on them no advantage that ours does not equally afford. If they reply, that their expectation of an approaching *judgment* of the world, is calculated to awaken sobriety and watchfulness, and that our views have a tendency to lull into dangerous security, we say, Not so, brethren. We, with yourselves, believe, and desire to be deeply influenced by the predicted judgment of the obstinate. We desire to stand in awe of that fearful denunciation against the church's enemies, "The nation that will not serve thee shall perish." But whilst we see and feel this, we have an enduring source of consolation to which you are strangers—we expect the speedy restoration of the Church to all its primitive holiness, and unity, and power, and we expect the world shall see, and feel, and be converted by its agency. Our mouth is open to you, Millenarian brethren, and towards you our heart is enlarged, though we differ from you in opinion. And now, for a recompense to us, in the same, be ye also enlarged. Let us love each other, whilst our judgment is divided. Let us be one in affection—one in heart.

To our Christian readers generally, we now must turn. Brethren, we wish most affectionately to press on your attention the two most important and momentous truths which our *Investigation* has, we think, very clearly developed. The world shall be converted to the faith and practice of the religion of the meek and lowly Jesus! And this great change shall, under God, be effected chiefly by human instrumentality! What a prospect lies before us! What manner of men ought we to be in all holy conversation, and unceasing labour in our great Master's service!

We now see both the extent and nature of the work to which we, and all other Christians, may, and must aspire. To be fellow-workers with the God of all grace, in the accomplishment of his vast and glorious design—the world's salvation.

The rest of our topics of inquiry are *practical.* We wish to know how our efforts may be most successfully employed. We wish to know what particular work to do, and where we should begin. We wish, not to "spend our strength for nought," but as "wise builders," to assist, in the best way, in rearing the spiritual temple. We wish to know the whole secret of that triumphant success which *once* attended the efforts of the Christians. We wish to know whether we may not become similarly successful. We wish to ascertain why the operations of the church are *now* so comparatively unsuccessful. We do not allude here to foreign operations; we speak of its transactions at home. And hence the whole of our remaining inquiries. We again present them to our readers, and their consummate importance must be our excuse for the repetition.

4. If the instrumentality of the church is destined to convert the world, have we evidence of its present fitness for the task? If not, it will be necessary to inquire,

5. Did not the *primitive* church evince all the influence, activity, and perseverance that may, "speaking as men," be deemed requisite?

6. Is there any intimation given in the Scriptures, that the Christian religion would, *necessarily*, in succeeding ages, lose any of its power; that the experience and practice of Christians should *necessarily* degenerate; and that strife, and division, and inefficiency should mark the character of the church?

7. Is there at present, any insurmountable obstacle to an immediate return to primitive purity, both of heart and life, by the members of the church?

8. Why, after nearly four centuries have been spent in professed reformation, has not such a return been generally effected?

9. Why have *modern* revivals of

religion, generally, been limited as to their influence, and transient in their duration?—How is it that after every period of renewed spiritual life and energy, and of consequent success, a state of indifference, inactivity, and declension in piety and zeal, has generally, if not universally, succeeded?—Thus not only arresting the progress of the *revival*, but undoing all, or a great part of, the good work that had been accomplished.

10. Does not the temporary and transient character of revivals, *if essentially connected with them*, take away all ground of hope for the world's conversion, by the ordinary means? But,

11. *Are* revivals of religion necessarily "transient as to their duration, and limited as to their influence?"—Does not Christianity furnish a remedy for this most distressing, most discouraging, and most fatal defect in the modern operations of Christian communities? If so,

12. Is it not solemnly incumbent on every community, on every congregation, and on every individual, promptly to apply the remedy?

13. *What is that remedy?*—what is it that shall give permanent and perpetually-increasing influence and success, to a revival of religion? By what means shall the "little leaven" now in the world, leaven the whole moral lump?

Lastly. What may and must each member of the church become,—what may and must each *be* and *do*, in order to acceptable and effectual co-operation with the God of all grace, in the accomplishment of his glorious designs?

We shall resume the inquiry in our next number.

THE WEALTH QUESTION.

The following letter from John Fothergill, surgeon, of Darlington, is inserted, not on account of the favourable opinion which it expresses of the pamphlets mentioned, but on account of the important sentiments which it contains:—

Dear Friend, Joseph Barker,

I have read with much pleasure and satisfaction thy tract on "The Duty of Christian Churches to maintain their own Poor," "Trotter's Lecture," "Smith's Rule for Christians," and his "Tract for the Times." They treat on subjects that have a good deal occupied my attention. I have had at least *doubts*, as to the advantages and even propriety of benefit societies, insurance companies, &c. I have also thought it problematical whether Rechabitism was calculated to promote the cause of Teetotalism. But above all, I have long been very certain that the accumulation of wealth by professing Christians, together with all the circumstances attending its acquisition and disposal, have been a source of incalculable evil.

I can, therefore, do no less than express my great satisfaction that you, the authors of the works above-mentioned, have taken up the subject in so clear, bold, and uncompromising a manner. In my opinion all the principal arguments brought forward in each of those publications are ncontrovertible, and cannot but sooner or later universally obtain. They are as plain as the principles of Teetotalism, and I think that they ought to be advocated from the platform and the press, by *all who are of sufficiently clean hands*.

I look upon it that the consistent and strenuous propagation of these principles, together with those of total-abstinence from intoxicating liquors, and the non-resistance of injuries (as enjoined in the Gospel,) would remove some of the greatest obstacles and stumbling-blocks which stand in the way of the general adoption of the religion of Jesus. They would be calculated to produce a complete revolution in the religious world, and tend to restore Christendom to somewhat of its pristine purity. Then might it again be said, "behold how these Christians love one another!" What a delightful state of things would be realized if all were to abstain from drinking intoxicating liquors, and all to cease from resisting evil, and if all unrighteous possession of riches were abandoned! In regard to this particular subject, if the principles which you have adduced were universally carried out, there would be more industry, because all would take some share in productive labour; and for that very reason none would find it needful to spend so many hours in oppressive labour in order to procure a scanty supply of the necessaries of life: they would consequently have more time for mental cultivation, and for social and religious duties. There would be no less labour performed, but it would be shared more equally; neither would there be any less wealth, because labour is the source of wealth, but that wealth would be more equally and beneficially diffused. If no one allowed his profits to accumulate, there would be little hazardous speculation, few ruinous failures, and much of the anxiety regarding pecuniary affairs would be avoided. It would lead to much more free, and friendly, and disinterested intercourse between man and man. There would be no fortune-hunting nor making merchandise of the happiness of sons and daughters in regard to matrimonal engagements. More marriages at a suitable age would take place, and women would be appreciated in proportion to their merits, not according to the length of their purses. The present style of living, adopted by most professing Christians, is decidedly opposed to seasonable and happy marriages, because it requires an amount of property to commence and support that style, which cannot be accumulated until life is far spent. Thus many most deserving young women are neglected, because they have not fortunes, and young men do not marry, because they wish to obtain some person with property, and they wait and toil till they can hoard up something to render them eligible to make proposals to the object of their choice.

I am asked, should not parents accumulate so much for their daughters, especially delicate ones, as to place them above dependence? If the Christian system were carried out, daughters would be no more in danger of being dependent than sons. Those who were healthy could maintain themselves by their industry, and in much more suitable employments than many excellent young women are engaged in at the present day. As to the *delicate ones*, they would be extremely rare. It is true, as both thou and I can testify, that some of the most amiable and excellent females have been of this description, and this without any fault of their own. It is an infringement of those laws of God upon which life and health depend, that produces delicate offspring. All delicate constitutions have arisen from that cause. Some are rendered delicate by indolence, luxury, and excess of refinement; others by immoderate labour, privation, and anxiety; both extremes acting upon offspring from generation to generation, each being equally incompatible with those physical laws, upon the due observance of which we can alone possess sound minds in sound bodies. But if the Gospel principles were fully carried out, those laws would not often be infringed, and then the aged, the feeble, and necessitous, would be a very slight burden upon the young, the vigorous, and industrious, and by the willing and liberal would be considered no burden at all.

I can never for a moment reconcile with true Christian conduct the possession of such enormous factories and business establishments as exist in some places. They would never have been erected for the mere purpose of acquiring a sufficiency of the common and allowable necessaries of life, without any design on the part of the proprietors to aggrandize themselves and their families by the acquisition and accumulation of wealth. Whilst they enable a few to live in unwarrantable splendour, they are the cause of oppression, disease, poverty, ignorance, and depravity, to hundreds and thousands employed in them. The hours of labour are longer than should be exacted from any human being, and this applies generally to the principals, assistants, and labourers; whilst the remuneration to the latter, is frequently totally disproportioned to the prices of provisions and other necessaries, so as to render it difficult, if not impossible, to procure suitable food, raiment, and education. It is true that establishments on this scale, and pushed with all the ardour of unrighteous competition, may produce the cheapest, that is, the lowest priced clothing; but nothing is really cheap, whatever may be its price, if it is purchased at the cost of the health, lives, morals and comforts of the people. A greater number of smaller establishments might not be so economical, it might take a greater outlay of capital to produce a given amount of manufactured goods, and there might be less profit to the proprietors; but this, instead of being any disadvantage, might be a great gain to all parties concerned. There might be fewer enormously rich families, but there would be more happy ones. And the great mass of the people would not be so poor and miserable. There might not be such splendid contributions to benevolent institutions or useful public works, but there would probably be an increased amount contributed in smaller sums, from greater numbers of individuals. But if this state of things were brought about, many of the present benevolent institutions would not be required, and would cease to exist, and as there would be more individuals qualified and disposed to take a voluntary share in every good work, there would be fewer hired agents; thus the money would be spared and the work frequently better done. At present, contributing money to benevolent undertakings is frequently a vain endeavour to purchase immunity from personal labour, by assisting to hire others to do that good which ought to have devolved upon the subscribers themselves.

It is impossible, in a letter of moderate length, to enter upon even a bare enumeration of all the evils that would be removed, or the blessings and advantages that would ensue from the general adoption of the principles that you have so prominently brought forward. Many of them have long been pictured in my own mind, but it would take volumes to write them. There is no doubt that it would be fatal to many customs and pleasures that are now fondly cherished by excellent persons, whose attention has scarcely ever been directed to the contemplation of the subject. It would be fatal to many trades and professions, and to the unrighteous oppression of the *real producers* of wealth. It would be fatal to the splendour of many private and public establishments. But, on the other hand, real domestic comfort, and social enjoyment, and religious intercourse, and peace of mind, would be greatly enhanced.

I know that merely putting the acquisition, possession, and employment of wealth on a proper footing, would avail nothing without a change of heart, but I trust that it would place mankind in more favourable circumstances for seeking that change, and the plan is scarcely likely to be adopted by those whose hearts have not in some degree submitted to the purifying influence of Divine Grace. I must however conclude, and sincerely desire that the tracts which have led to this long and I fear tedious letter may, through the blessing of God, be productive of much good, not only to the present but succeeding generations. I look upon them as a part of that instrumentality, which is at the present time so extensively operating to promote the gracious designs of the great Creator of all things, in regard to his poor, fallen, unworthy creature, MAN.

I remain,
Thy sincere friend,
JOHN FOTHERGILL.
Darlington, 4th Mo. 22nd, 1841.

INFIDELITY AND WICKEDNESS.

An *Infidel* is one who will not believe what God says to him. A man may err in *interpreting* what God says, and yet have nothing of Infidelity about him. Two persons may have very different opinions as to the meaning of several parts of Christ's Sermon on the Mount, and yet both of them may believe that the sermon is from God, and both may believe that every part of it is true and good. And so with respect to other portions of the Sacred Scriptures, and to the Sacred Scriptures generally. You may take twelve persons, all of which believe every thing that is written in the Epistles of Paul on the subject of justification, and yet not two of them shall have exactly the same views of the Apostle's meaning on this subject. When the Apostle speaks about works, some will understand him to mean circumcision and obedience to the law of Moses, and others will understand him to mean repentance and obedience to the law of Christ: when he speaks of faith, some will understand him to mean a belief of the Gospel generally; others will understand him to mean a belief in some particular doctrines of the Gospel; others again will understand him to mean a sure trust and confidence of a man that he is forgiven, and others again will understand him to mean a simple, heedless, inoperative reliance on what they call the finished work of Christ. Some will think, that by justification the Apostle means a change of heart and life, a being made truly and personally righteous; others will think, that by justification is meant nothing more than the forgiveness of sins; and others will understand justification to mean the imputation of Christ's righteousness, and the accounting of the man righteous and perfect, on account of the righteousness supposed to be thus imputed. We say, that all those persons, notwithstanding their great and multiplied differences as to the meaning of the Apostle, may still be sincere and true believers: they may all be equally persuaded that what the Apostle says is from God, and that what God says is true. They do not interpret the words of God as *we* do, any more than we interpret them as they do; but they *believe* them as firmly as we believe them.

The difference between Error and Infidelity ought always to be borne in mind. All Infidelity is Error, but all Error is not Infidelity. For want of understanding or for want of remembering this distinction, some people get wrong, and do their Christian brethren great injustice. They suppose faith to consist in the belief of certain opinions, or of some human interpretation of God's words; and they, therefore, regard those who doubt or disbelieve those opinions, or who understand the words of God to mean something *different* from the meaning given to them in those human interpretations, as Infidels. This ought not to be. He only is an Infidel, who believes not the word of God. But the persons of whom we are speaking *do* believe the words of the Lord, and merely differ from us with respect to their meaning.

We have no right to call any one an Infidel, who sincerely believes the testimony of God, however much he may differ from us in the interpretation of that testimony.

Wickedness is the refusal to obey God's laws. But it is with God's laws as it is with God's testimony: two persons may receive all the same precepts from God, and may be equally ready to reduce them to practice, and yet have different ideas of what the precepts require. One may believe that the precept, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth," prohibits all laying up money in Benefit Societies, in Life Insurances, in Beneficent Funds, as well as all hoarding in Coffers, Banks, and Funds: while another may believe that its meaning is not quite so broad. One may think that the precept, "Swear not at all," prohibits oaths of all kinds; while another may think that it prohibits only such as are not required by the civil magistrate. One may think that the precept "Love your enemies," requires us to treat our enemies kindly in all cases; while another may believe it to have reference to *private* enemies only, and not to the *public* enemies of one's country. One may believe that the command to wash each other's feet, requires us literally to wash the feet of our Christian brethren, at least once in a year, while another may understand it to require no more than a readiness to condescend to any offices, however humiliating, of love to our brethren, and a willingness to wash their feet, *if by washing them we could really serve them.* One may believe that the baptism which Christ requires as essential to salvation, is the baptism of the Spirit, a thorough renovation of soul; another may believe that the baptism which Christ requires as essential to salvation, is baptism with water. One may understand the law of love to require him to abstain from wine and flesh; another may so understand it, as to consider himself free to use both. And so with respect to other precepts; there may be a difference, more or less, in the interpretation or application of every precept in the New Testament; and there may, in consequence, be a very considerable difference in the proceedings of the two parties, and yet neither of them may be chargeable with wickedness. Both may respect the authority of God; both may receive his laws as the rule of their life; both may be sincerely desirous to understand and obey them in their true and fullest meaning; both are, therefore, truly obedient subjects, and both will be truly accepted of God.

The matter may be illustrated by a reference to one's self and one's children. I send my three children to put my books in order, in the library, giving to each a particular row of shelves to fill. They hearken to what I say, and run off to their work at once, and keep closely at it till it is done. On looking over their work I find that one of them has put the largest books on the top shelves, and the small ones on the bottom shelves: another of them has put the large books on the bottom shelves, and the small ones on the top: and I find further that the third, my youngest child, has taken them just as they came to hand, and that instead of putting them all *on one end*, he has laid them all flat on the side. Thus only one of my children has done his work exactly to my mind. What shall I say to the other two? Shall I call them wicked, disobedient children? Shall I charge them with ingratitude and disrespect to their father, and take the rod and chastise them? No such thing. I should deserve to be chastised myself if I were to do anything of the kind. There is no such thing as disobedience or ingratitude in the whole affair. The two little blunderers were as obedient as the elder one who put up the books to my mind. The little girl who put the large books at the top, was as obedient as her elder brother, who put the large ones at the bottom; and the little one, who laid them all flat on one side, was as dutiful and loving as either of them. The difference in their way of putting up the books arose from their different ideas of *order*. I simply told them to put the books in *order*, without saying anything to them about the *particular* order which I should prefer; and they did as I told them. And though they differed from each other in the *interpretation* of the word *order*, yet they all obeyed my command, they all showed a readiness to please me, and I am pleased with them all accordingly.

And it is thus with our Father which is in heaven and his children. He commands us to do good, as we have opportunity, unto all men, especially to the household of faith; but he does not tell us by what particular means we shall try to do men good. We hearken to the voice of our Father, and set to work to do what he has commanded us. One builds a Sunday School, and supplies it with books and with teachers; another buys a printing press, and spends his time and property in printing and circulating useful books; a third goes round from house to house with his Bible, reading, to all who will hear him, the records of truth. One man forms a temperance society, another forms a peace society, and another forms a society for feeding the hungry and clothing the naked. One thinks that it would be best to furnish all with suitable employment, and he accordingly builds large workshops: another thinks it would be a good plan to make people *provident* as he calls it, and he accordingly recommends Benefit Societies, Life Insurances, and Savings' Banks. All of them revere the authority of God, and all are acting *in obedience* to that authority. All are wishful to please God, and all are aiming at doing the greatest good to men. Yet all of them pursue different plans; all try to promote the welfare of their fellow-men by different means. Some of them are doing real good; they are benefitting their fellow-men, and that to a great extent: but that which some others are doing, is of a doubtful character; it is not certain whether it is calculated really to benefit mankind or not. But what shall we say in such a case? Shall we call some of them rebellious, and others of them obedient? No such thing. They are *all* obedient, and the simple difference is, that one believes that he shall best serve the interests of mankind by one means, and another thinks he will best serve the interests of mankind by other means. If I see one labouring to benefit mankind by wrong means, I may endeavour to make him sensible of his error, and bring him to use better means; but I may not pronounce him rebellious or wicked because of his error. There are multitudes, I doubt not, at this moment, who are using means with a view to benefit their fellow-men, while in reality they are injuring them, There are surgeons and physicians, equally desirous to give health to their patients, yet following directly opposite methods of treatment: and there are *moral* physicians who do the same. Yet all may be truly obedient to the will of God, and all may be equally accepted and approved of Him.

If men should use wrong means to benefit their fellow-men through carelessness, or through the influence of some evil passion, the case would be different. And that men's errors as to the best way of doing good to others frequently *do* spring from carelessness or passion, or from other faulty sources, we cannot deny: but this is not always the case. Their errors may originate in a defective education, or in a slowness or narrowness of understanding, or in the lack of needful opportunities of acquiring information. There are, in fact, a thousand causes which may lead men innocently into error as to the best means of promoting the welfare of mankind. Perhaps nine out of ten of all the benevolent and pious persons in our country, ten years ago, thought they were doing their friends, their servants, their work-people, and their children real service, in giving them wine, ale, or spirits. I have no doubt but that Adam Thompson believed that he was doing important service to his neighbours, when he was encouraging them to establish Benefit Societies, and so to provide funds against future and uncertain calamities. And I have no doubt but that there are multitudes still, who believe such institutions necessary to the welfare ot society, and who favour and support them from purely benevolent motives. And so with many other things. We are to make a difference, therefore, in all these cases, between error and rebellion.

We may *err* with respect to what our Heavenly Father requires of us, and yet not be criminal; but we cannot *rebel* without being criminal. An *erring* man may go to heaven, but a *rebellious* man cannot. Error is, in some cases, unavoidable, without a miracle; but rebellion may always be avoided.

Some appear not to understand this difference between error and rebellion, and they make very grievous mistakes in consequence. A person came to me some time ago, and told me that he had been deceiving himself for several years: he had believed that all that time he had been obeying God, and that he was, in consequence, approved of God: but now he had found out his error, he said, and had discovered that he had never been obeying God at all, and that all his former assurances of God's favour, and all his hopes of future blessedness, had been nothing but a delusion. When he came to explain himself, I found that the whole originated in ignorance of the difference between error and disobedience. He thought he had been living so many years in disobedience, merely because he had not, during that time, had right notions respecting a certain command of Christ. And I have heard of others that have fallen into the same errors. Many of the followers of Alexander Campbell, of America, teach that no man truly obeys Christ, who does not get immersed in water; that no man can be forgiven until he is thus immersed; and that all a man's persuasions and assurances of his acceptance with God, are only dreams and delusions, unless he has been immersed. But they are all wrong. Suppose it true that the law of Christ requires immersion in water, would it therefore follow, that no man truly obeys Christ who does not understand that truth? Would it follow, that up to the time that a man first discovers that Christ's law requires immersion in water, he is a rebel? We must, in that case, suppose that Luther and Melancthon, and Wesley and Whitfield, and Fox and Penn, and Baxter and Howe, were all rebels as long as they lived. We must also, in that case, reckon every man a rebel, who does not rightly understand every other law of Christ. And then, if every man is a rebel against God, who does not obey every command of Christ in its true and fullest meaning, even the followers of A. Campbell themselves perhaps may be found in the ranks of the rebellious.

But we hope such Errors will be laid aside, and that professors of religion will learn to think more correctly on this subject, and judge and speak more charitably of their imperfect brethren. A man may misunderstand Christ's doctrine, and not be an Infidel; he may misunderstand Christ's precepts, and yet not be a rebel.

Still this also is true; that if we be truly sincere, and obey God according to the light we have, God will give us still further light. "The meek he will guide in judgment; the meek he will teach his way." We have a right, if we be faithful to the light we have already received, to look for clearer and fuller illuminations continually. Still, even to the most devoted of his followers, God does not give all light at once; he gives it as they are able to improve it. The sun does not reach its height the moment it rises; it moves slowly, and climbs its upward path by degrees. And so it is with the faithful servant of God. "The path of the just is as the shining light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day." The Lord give us a good understanding in all things.

CONTROVERSY.

1. Unless controversy can be conducted in a mild and charitable manner, it would be well for professors of religion to avoid it altogether. It cannot look well to the world, to see the professed followers of the same meek and lowly Saviour, contending with each other fiercely and unkindly. It cannot look well to angels and to God: and if we would contemplate the subject on our knees before God, and in the clear and solemn light of eternity, it could not look well to us. It *cannot* be right for professors of religion to quarrel with any one; and it cannot but be very wrong for them to quarrel with one another.

We cannot say that all controversy is wrong; but Christians ought to indulge in no controversy, but what they could carry on in the personal presence of the Saviour, and in the believing contemplation of the judgment day.

I have often been struck with the change which I have found take place in the tones of people's voices, when I have unexpectedly entered their houses. Before reaching the door, I have heard some one with a loud clamourous noise finding fault with the children: but the moment the eye of the party has fallen on me, the voice was lowered, and the tone entirely changed. The parties seemed to feel that they had been speaking more loudly or more violently than was needful, and more loudly and violently than they could justify. I imagine it would make a great difference in the tone of many religious disputants, if Christ were some day to make his appearance among them, and give them properly to understand who he was. They would lower their tone, and in many cases drop the dispute altogether, I imagine. We could not speak, and write, and act as we sometimes do, if we had the personal presence of the Saviour with us.

But the *spiritual* presence of the Saviour is amongst us. He is not only at our door, he is by our side. He surrounds us continually; and his eye is always upon us; and he trieth the hearts and the reins. And why does not the recollection of his spiritual presence restrain us from evil, as powerfully as his personal presence would? Are we to be influenced by nothing but what we see? Do we not profess to walk by faith? to act in all things as though we saw the invisible, and as though we had the eternal future present with us? It is a proof that we are lacking in faith, when we carry on controversy in anger: it is a proof that our hearts are forgetful in whose presence we live, and by whose eyes we are perpetually overlooked.

I see nó necessity for controversy to cease, but I do see it to be desirable that no one should engage in it that cannot preserve his temper, and go through it in the spirit of the Gospel. The moment a man becomes angry or violent, that moment he ought to desist from all controversy with others, and go and engage in one with himself, in secret with his God. How unseemly, how inconsistent, for a man to profess to stand forward as the public advocate of truth, and the reformer of his neighbour, while his violent tones and his angry expressions make it manifest, that his own soul is like "a city broken down and without walls."

2. Those who engage in controversy ought not only to be good-tempered; they ought also to be

just. 1. They ought fairly to represent the sentiments of their opponents. They ought not to attribute to a man sentiments which he does not hold: they ought to represent truly the sentiments which he *does* hold: they ought not to add to them; they ought not to take from them; they ought not to distort them: they ought in this, as in all other things, to do to others as they would that others should do unto them. 2. They ought not to attempt to injure a man's reputation; and try to frighten people from his sentiments, by falsely representing him as a suspicious and dangerous man. If his sentiments are false, prove them so; if they be true, let them triumph without a grudge. If the man's sentiments are false, they may be refuted without attacking the man's reputation; and if they be true, your attack on the man's reputation may prove a wrong done to truth. 3. To be just, we ought fairly to represent our opponent's *arguments* as well as his sentiments. It is the practice of many disputants to pass by the arguments of their opponents, and spend all their time upon some incidental or less important observations, which have little or nothing to do with the question. It is the custom of others to take a *part* of an argument, and represent it as the whole. Sometimes an argument or a proof consists of six or seven parts. When these six or seven parts stand all together, they prove the point in hand beyond doubt; but if *one* of them be wanting, the other five or six prove nothing at all. Some disputants, in cases like this, purposely leave out one or more of the parts of an argument, and spend their time in showing that the remaining parts do not prove the point. Others take all the parts perhaps, one by one, and answer each separately, but still act unjustly by representing each part as a separate argument, instead of taking them all as parts of but *one* argument. 4. Then others misrepresent the point in debate. They mis-state the question. They represent a person as contending for a point, for which he does not contend. Perhaps I wish to prove that the word baptism in a certain passage means regeneration, and that what is required of us in the passage is, that we should be new creatures. Another man thinks that the word baptism in that passage means immersion in water, and that the passage requires us to be so immersed. If those two persons enter into a controversy on this point, how should the question be stated? Simply thus; "Does the word baptism in this passage mean regeneration, a spiritual baptism, or does it mean immersion in water?" Now, suppose the man who contends for water baptism to insinuate, when he begins to write on the subject, that the question is, Whether we are bound to obey *all* Christ's commands, or only such as we please? and suppose him to begin to talk about the danger of setting ourselves up for judges of what God ought to command—of the importance of obeying God in *little* things, as well as in great things; would the man be acting justly? Would such conduct be just either towards the truth, or towards his opponent? Yet scarcely any thing is more common. I had once a dispute with a friend about the nature of justifying faith. I contended that the faith by which we were justified was a belief of the Gospel generally, and that *then* we were justified by faith, when faith worked by love, and brought us into willing subjection to God's authority, and into humble dependence on his promises. My opponent contended that the faith by which we were justified was simply faith in Christ's blood as a propitiatory sacrifice. *I* contended that this was only a *part* of justifying faith, *he* that it was the whole. Both parties believed that men are justified by faith; the simple question was, What is the nature of the faith by which we are justified? My opponent, however, whenever he spoke on the subject, represented the question to be, "Are we justified by faith, or are we not?" These things ought not so to be. We ought to deal justly with subjects, and we ought to deal justly with our brethren.

3. We ought also, if we profess to answer a man's writings, to give the *whole* of his arguments. We ought not to take one here and another there, and leap over the main body of them: we ought to take the whole in order, and consider them fairly. "The fair way of conducting a dis-

pute," says Paley, "is to exhibit one by one the arguments of your opponent, and with each argument the precise and specific answer you are able to give it." This plan, alas, is followed but seldom. It is the plan followed by Chillingworth, in reply to the opponents of Protestantism; and it is the plan followed in some other works: but it is not the common plan. The reason is given by the same writer just quoted. "If this method," says he, "be not so common, nor found so convenient, as might be expected, the reason is, because it suits not always with the design of a writer, which are no more perhaps than to make a book; to confound some arguments, and to keep others out of sight; to leave what is called an impression upon the reader, without any care to inform him of the proofs or principles by which his opinions should be governed."

4. We ought to make use of nothing but truth in controversy, and we ought, before we utter any thing, to use all necessary means to ascertain what *is* truth. We ought to state nothing as fact, but what we *know* to be fact. We ought to use nothing as an argument, but what we have good reason to believe is unmixed solid truth. Some have professed to believe it lawful to use deceit in support of a good cause; but it is a bad principle. All frauds are wicked; but it is especially wicked to employ fraud under pretence of supporting the cause of truth and piety. And yet the practice, I fear, is very common. Formerly this practice was carried on to an extent almost inconceivable. In the early ages of Christianity, several Gospels and Epistles were forged, and fathered upon the Apostles; and in after ages, stories of miracles and revelations were multiplied without end; and the object appears generally to have been to support some peculiar notion, which could not be so easily supported by honest evidence. Apostolic tradition was pretended for favourite opinions and practices, and slanders were invented and circulated to bring into disrepute those persons who would not support them. Those wicked arts were called "*pious frauds*," and were supposed by many to be as perfectly lawful. Indeed, persons of later ages have been found, I understand, who have endeavoured to justify them. And even to this present time, several kinds of fraud are employed by religious disputants, of a very similar description. It is quite common for persons to quote passages of Scripture, to prove things which they themselves know full well, or easily might know, they do *not* prove. There is a passage, for instance, in Isaiah, first chapter, which says, "The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint: from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot there is no soundness; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores." The passage had reference to the Jewish people, and not to the whole human family; and it spake of their *afflictions*, and not of their *character*. Yet this passage is almost constantly quoted, both by authors and preachers, as proving the doctrine of man's fall and depravity. Multitudes of similar instances might be given. The words of Scripture should always be taken in the sense in which they were spoken by God, and never employed as arguments in any other sense.

5. No man is fit to engage in controversy who has any other ends to serve than those of truth and piety. If a man engage in controversy on any question in which his interests or passions are concerned, he is sure to get wrong. When men who love money, perceive that if *their* side of the question triumph, they will secure a hundred pounds a year, and that if the other side of the question triumph, they will *lose* a hundred pounds a year, it is impossible that they should speak and write in such a controversy without violating the principles of Christian love and equity. And so when honour or power is concerned. The prevalence of *one* principle will bring down the high and ambitious man to a level with his brethren; the prevalence of *another* principle will fix him in his lofty seat, and add to the splendour of his beloved honours: it is not possible for this proud ambitious man to conduct himself in such a controversy properly. It would be folly to expect any such thing. Before a man can act his part in a controversy he ought, he must be free from all unholy passion, and from

all regard to selfish interests. He must have no interests but the interests of truth and righteousness. He must be a man who cares for no wealth, but the treasures of heaven; who covets no honours, but those which come from God; and who dreads no calamity, but an evil conscience, and the displeasure of God. No one else can *afford* to be just. And the reason why controversy is generally conducted with such violence, and with so much deceit and injustice is, that those who engage in controversy have generally some interest of their own to serve, apart from the interests of Christ.

If persons were fully under the influence of love to truth, and love to God, and love to one another, controversy would be nothing more than free and affectionate conversation, or a friendly and agreeable correspondence. There would be no more of violence, of bitterness, or of injustice, than there is in the daily intercourse of a loving and devoted pair. In reading the Scriptures, I meet with a passage which I cannot understand, and I ask my wife if *she* understands it. If she thinks she does *not* understand it, she tells me so, and there the matter rests. If she thinks she *does* understand it, she endeavours to explain it to me, and I express my obligations to her. But if her explanation does not appear to me to be exactly the true one, what then? I don't abuse her; I don't call her a wicked liar, an infidel, a child of the devil, a proud blaspheming heretic; no such thing. I love her as dearly as I love myself; and I should as soon think of throwing myself into a pit, or leaping into the fire, as I should think of saying a single unkind word to her. She gave me the best explanation of the passage she could; and she would have given me a better if she had had a better to give; and I am all the same obliged to her as if she had given me the best in the world. I should deserve to be branded as a reprobate, if I were to treat her unkindly. What *do* I do? I simply tell her that I think her explanation is not exactly correct, and kindly give her the reasons why I think so. If she adopts my views, so and good: if she thinks my reasons not sound, and reply in confirmation of her own views, it is still all right. If we converse on the subject again, there is no evil arises from it. We love each other, and we love the truth, and our only desire is to promote each other's welfare, and the glory of our common Lord. We use no fraud, we take no unfair advantages of each other: we simply strive to assist each other's apprehensions of the truth, and to promote each other's welfare; and there we cease, still loving and beloved, and mutually obliged. Whether I be led to think as she thinks, or she be led to think as I think, or whether, after our loving conversation, our views remain as before, all is well. The probability is, that after our mutual and affectionate explanations, our views will be one; but if otherwise, our hearts are one, and the thought of harshness or unkindness never enters our souls.

And why should not controversy be carried on in this way among professing Christians generally. If there were the same freedom from selfish interests; if there were the same undivided love of truth and piety; if there were the same devoted love to each other and to God among professing Christians generally, controversies *would* be thus conducted. If it were not that the "*old man*" so frequently puts himself forward in our discussions, controversy might be conducted both agreeably and profitably.

Let us try, if we, who see and lament the evils of controversy as it is generally conducted at present, cannot conduct our controversies in a better way. Let us seek, in the first place, for a complete deliverance from all selfish and ungodly feelings. Let us seek for a fulness of love to God, and of love to all mankind. Let us surrender ourselves and all our interests into the hands of God. Let us have no interests but the interests of truth and holiness. Let us learn to regard ourselves as responsible for nothing, but the simple discharge of our duty, in obedience to the will of God. Let us learn not to be alarmed for our sentiments, or anxious about the success of our schemes. Let us content ourselves with a free and manly declaration of our principles, and with the faithful discharge of every duty; and then let us leave the rest with God. Let us have confidence in God, and let us have confidence in truth. If we are called to make remarks on the sentiments of others, let us do it in meekness and in love. If any one should make remarks on our sentiments, let us listen to them with patience and candour. If they should do it lovingly, let us be thankful; if they should do it bitterly and violently, let us bear it with meekness. If we find that those who differ from us, cannot take part in controversy without violating the great principles of Christian love and equity, let us peacefully leave them to themselves, and address our remarks to other parties. If we pursue this plan, we shall neither take harm ourselves, nor do harm to others. We shall do good, and we shall receive good; and our controversies will prove a general blessing.

SLAVERY IN AMERICA.

LETTER FROM JOSEPH STURGE.

To Hope H. Slaughter, Slave-Trader, Baltimore.

Since thou courteously allowed me, in company with my friend, John G. Whittier, to visit thy slave establishment in the city of Baltimore, a few weeks since, I have often felt a desire to address a few lines to thee. I need not perhaps say, that my feelings were painfully exercised in looking over thy buildings, fitted up with bolts and bars, for the reception of human beings for sale; a sense of the misery and suffering of the unfortunate slaves, who have from time to time been confined there—of their separation from home and kindred—of the dreary prospect before them of a life of unrequited toil in the South and South-West rested heavily upon me. I could there realize the true nature of the system of slavery. I was in a market-house for human flesh, where humanity is degraded to a level with the brute, and where children of our common Father in heaven, and for whom our blessed Redeemer offered up the atoning sacrifice of his blood, were bargained for and sold like beasts that perish, and when I regarded thee as the merchant in this dreadful traffic, and heard thee offer remarks which might be considered, as in some degree, an apology for thy business, calling our attention to the cleanly state of the apartments, the wholesome provisions, &c., and especially when I heard thee declare that thou hadst been educated by a pious mother—that thou wast never addicted to swearing or other immoralities, and that thy business was a *legalized* one—that thou didst nothing contrary to law, and that, while in thy possession, the poor creatures were treated kindly, that families were not separated;* I was glad to perceive some evidence that the nature of thy employment had not extinguished the voice of conscience within thee. In thy sentiments, and in the manner of their utterance, I thought I could see that truth had not left itself without a witness in thy breast, and that a sense of the wrongfulness of thy occupation still disturbed thee.

To thy remark, that thy business was necessary to the system of slavery, and an essential part of it; and that, if slave-holding was to be justified at all, the slave-trade must be also, I certainly can offer no valid objection, for I have never been able to discern any moral difference between the planter of Virginia, and the slave dealer of Baltimore, Richmond, and Washington. Each has his part to act in the system, and each is necessary to the other, and if the matter in all its bearings were not painfully serious, it would be amusing to notice the absurd contempt with which the slave-owner of Maryland or Virginia professes to look upon the trader, whose purchase of his surplus slaves alone enables him to retain the residue in his possession, for it seems very evident that the only profitable part of the system in these states, at the present time, is the sale of the annual increase of the slaves. In passing from thy premises, we looked in upon the Triennial Convention of the Baptists of the United States, then in session in the city of Baltimore, where I found slaveholding ministers of a high rank in the church, urging successfully the exclusion from the missionary board of that society, all those who in principle and practice were known to be decided abolitionists; and the result of their efforts satisfied me that the darkest picture of slavery is not to be found in the slave-gaol of the trader, but rather in a convocation of professed ministers of the Gospel of Christ, expelling from the board of a society formed to enlighten the heathen of other nations, all who consistently labour for the overthrow of a system, which denies a knowledge of the holy Scriptures to three millions of heathens at home!

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* The latter remark of course applied only to the time they remained with thee; for on the day we visited thy establishment, a friend with whom I was dining, informed me that a few days before a woman and child had been sold to thee, whose husband and father was a free man, who, in his distress, had offered to bind himself for a term of years, in order to raise the sum (I think 800 dols.) demanded for them, but as he had been unable to do so, my friend made no doubt they had been sent off with the very lot of slaves which we were told by thyself had just been forwarded to New Orleans from thy prison. Who is most guilty in this atrocious transaction? the slave-owner who sold the woman and child at Baltimore?—or *thou*, the transporter of them for ever from their husband and parent?

But, allow me in a spirit, as I trust, of Christian kindness, to entreat thee not to seek excuses for thy own course in the evil conduct of others.

Thou hast already reached the middle period of life—the future is uncertain. By thy hopes of peace here and hereafter, let me urge thee to abandon this occupation. It is not necessary to argue its intrinsic wickedness, for thou knowest it already. I would, therefore, beseech thee to listen to that voice which I am persuaded urges thee to put away the evil of thy doings, to "do justly and love mercy," and thus cease to draw down upon thyself the curse which fell upon those merchants of Tyre, who "traded in the persons of men." That these warnings of conscience may not be longer neglected on thy part, is the sincere wish of one, who, while he abhors thy occupation, feels nothing but kindness and good-will towards thyself.

JOSEPH STURGE,
Of Birmingham, England.

New York, 6th Mo., 30th, 1841.

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES. No. 2.

(Continued from Page 72.)

7. To increase my obligations to search the Scriptures, they are written very plain; they are adapted to my low and limited capacity. So far as the great matters that immediately concern man's duty and interests are concerned, there is not perhaps a plainer book in the world than the Sacred Writings. Some speak of the sacred Scriptures as if they were made up of mysteries; but such people do not know what they say, or else they speak what they must know to be untrue. The Scriptures *have* their mysteries; they contain passages and books which at present are hard to be understood. Indeed some portions of the sacred Scriptures are altogether unintelligible perhaps at the present day: I refer especially to some of the prophetical writings, and to some portions of the book of Revelations. But as for those portions which concern our immediate interests and duty, they are as plain as they well could be; so plain that he that runs may read; so plain that a way-faring man, though a fool, may understand them. God knew before he wrote the Scriptures, that most of those who needed instruction from him, were poor common people, and he accordingly adapted the Scriptures to their capacities. Unbelievers frequently complain about the obscurity and mysteriousness of the Scriptures; but we have reason to believe that unbelievers generally, are not dissatisfied with the Scriptures so much because they are dark and mysterious, as because they are so plain. The Scriptures are so plain, that they cannot read them or hear them without being condemned. The light forces itself upon them against their will, and vexes them by exposing their guiltiness: they love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil. And when Priests, and Popes, and Conferences complain of the difficulties and obscurities of the Scriptures, we have reason to believe that they are under a somewhat similar feeling to that of unbelievers. Is it because the Scriptures are dark, and hard to be understood, that the Pope and his servants will not allow the common people to read them? Or is it be-

cause the Pope and his servants know them to be so plain, that if the common people were allowed to read them, they would detect the errors of popery, and be led to throw off the cruel impositions under which they groan, and to call in question the anti-christian authority of their spiritual rulers? The Pope and his servants know full well, I imagine, that if the common people were to read and study the sacred Scriptures, they would soon be made wiser than some of their teachers. Their fear is, not that the common people would be unable to understand the Scriptures, but that they would understand them too well, and apply them too correctly and faithfully to prevailing errors and abuses.

The Scriptures are made up principally of matters of truth, of matters of duty, and of matters of fact; and they are plain on all those matters. What the Scriptures teach respecting God, and providence, and Christ, and man, and redemption, and a future state, is level to the commonest capacity. What they teach respecting our duty to God and to our fellow-men, is as plain. And as to matters of fact, the account of the creation, the history of God's conduct towards men, the history of the Jews, the history of Christ and his Apostles, are all so plain, so far as great events, and the general drift of the history are concerned, that a child can understand them. In all matters of importance, the Scriptures are their own interpreters: they carry their own explanations along with them. It is neither a gigantic mind, nor vast stores of human learning that are necessary to a right and profitable understanding of the Scriptures; but an honest heart; a mind truly desirous to know, and willing to do, the whole will of God.

8. I am further encouraged to search the Scriptures, by the assurances which are given me, that in thus seeking to know the truth, I shall have the assistance of Heaven. If I lack wisdom, I am encouraged to ask it of God, who giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not. Indeed God gives to all his people a measure of the Holy Spirit, for the very purpose of leading them to a knowledge of the truth, and enabling them to understand and do his will. As the Apostle John said to the Christians of his day, so we may say to all true Christians of the present day in their measure: "Ye have an unction from the Holy one, and know all things. The anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you, but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things." While we walk humbly before God, his spirit reveals to us all matters of truth and duty, as we are prepared to receive his revelations. We are also encouraged by Christ to ask for fuller measures of the Holy Spirit: "Ask, and it shall be given you: seek, and ye shall find: knock, and it shall be opened unto you. What man is he, who, if his son ask bread, will give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will give him a serpent? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children; how much more shall your heavenly Father give his Holy Spirit unto them that ask it."

We have, therefore, if we are truly pious, the promise of the best commentator on Scripture, the best interpreter of God's will, in the universe. No person is so likely to be able properly to explain a letter or a book, as the man himself that wrote it. And so with the Sacred Scriptures. No one can be so well qualified to explain the Sacred Oracles, as that Spirit by whose inspiration they were written. And that spirit is ever present with us. He dwells, not only in our habitations, but in our hearts. This blessed Spirit, this fountain of light and love, we can consult on all occasions, with the assurance that all such information shall be given us, as is needful to prepare us for all the will of God.

Obj. It may be said, that I may still err, notwithstanding my infallible guide. I answer, If I should err, 1. My error will not be the fault of my Guide, but of myself: it will not be the result of *following* my Guide, but of my failure in *not* following him. 2. If I should remain in error or ignorance on any point, it will not be charged to me as sin, provided I follow faithfully the plan laid down for me by God. God will require of me only according to that which I have; and not according to that which I have not. But if I were to remain in ignorance, or fall into error, in consequence of pursuing some other plan, contrary to the one which He has appointed, my ignorance or error would be charged on me as sin, and I should fall under condemnation. 3. If I err while I endeavour to follow a Guide that is infallible, what should I do if I were to follow guides as imperfect and as liable to err as myself?

Obj. "But there are some things," it is said, "which are not plainly taught in the Scriptures, and which common people would never be able to understand without the assistance of able and learned men." I answer, 1. Those things which the Scriptures do not plainly teach, it is not needful for me to understand. 2. If I only get a thorough knowledge of all those things which the Scriptures *do* plainly teach, and faithfully reduce them to practice, I shall be as wise and as good a man as I need to be. And 3. If able and learned men would content themselves with learning and teaching those things which the Scriptures *do* plainly teach, they would do a great deal more good in the world than they generally do.

Obj. "But what is to be done when people cannot agree with respect to the *meaning* of Scripture?" We answer, we must peacefully disagree, and lovingly bear with each other.

Obj. "Must the church then be rent and torn with controversy for ever?"

Ans. It is not *controversy* that rends and tears the church, but the presumptuous and foolish attempts of intolerant men to *settle* controversies. Controversy does no harm but good, when let alone, and conducted in a proper spirit: the evil effects so frequently attributed to controversy, are the result of evil tempers, and of the attempts of lordly men to force their judgment upon the minds of their brethren.

Obj. "But would it not be better in all disputed points, to submit matters to the decision of some wise person or persons?"

Ans. 1. Do you not see that by making such a proposition, you give birth to a number of new controversies? In the first place a controversy arises as to whether your proposal be a good one; and then, supposing that all should agree that it is, another question arises, namely, To whose judgment shall all our controversies be submitted? These two controversies themselves would not be settled to every one's satisfaction in less than a thousand years, unless you yourself should settle them, by withdrawing your proposition. 2. Those controversies which the Sacred Scriptures themselves do not decide, do not need to be decided.

Obj. "But would it not be better for people to agree to follow those who are known to be wise and good men, than for every one to judge for himself?"

Ans. But who *are* the wise and good? I must still use my own judgment in *this* question; and if I may use it in *this*, why not in *every other?* Before I can pronounce a man to be *wise and good*, I must ascertain that he thinks and acts in accordance with the Sacred Scriptures; and in order to that I must understand what the Sacred Scriptures teach and command. And when I understand all that, I shall not want any wise or good man to judge for me. I shall *myself* be a wise man then, and if I act according to my judgment, I shall be a good man too. In short, I cannot tell who *is* a wise man, till I understand the Scriptures; and when I understand the Scriptures, I am a wise man myself.

The only course therefore that I can safely follow, is to search the Scriptures for myself, and to interpret them and act on them according to the light which God has given me. This course I feel resolved, by the grace of God, to pursue to the end of my life. I shall not *despise* the judgment of my brethren, but I shall not adopt it as infallible. I shall not refuse the assistance of commentators, but I cannot become the slave of any one. If men can clear away the mists around a subject, so and good; but I cannot allow them to *see* for me; I must *see* for myself. If they can lend me any useful glasses, it is right; but they must not request me to give up the use of my eyes. If any one can *help* me in forming my judgment, I shall be thankful; but I must still *judge*.

"Not to man, but God submit;
Lay my reasonings at *His* feet."

SOME ACCOUNT OF PETER JONES, AN INDIAN CONVERT,

As communicated by himself, in 1832.

I WAS born in the woods of Upper Canada, in the year 1801. In early life I was taught by my mother and brethren all the customs and manners of the Chippeway nation of Indians, to which I belong. When at the age of 14 or 15, my father sent me to an English school, at which time I began to learn the English language. In the year 1828, I attended a Methodist meeting amongst the settlers in Upper Canada. Whilst at this meeting, the Great Spirit (through the preaching of the Gospel) opened my blinded eyes to see my lost estate as a sinner. I then called on the name of the Christian's God and Saviour for mercy, and by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ I obtained that joy which is unspeakable and full of glory. He took away my old savage heart, and gave me a new heart—a heart to love Jesus and all his people; then Jesus found me, and had mercy upon me, the chief of sinners! Shortly after my conversion from heathenism to Christianity, I felt it my duty to recommend the same religion, which had made my heart so glad, to my native brethren, who were then in a most wretched and miserable state, as having no hope, and without God in the world. The blessed Saviour prepared my way before me, and gave success to my feeble labours; and in a short time many of my countrymen joined with me in walking the new path that leads up to heaven. Then I left my native land to come over and shake hands with my Christian brothers and sisters in England. There are more than 1200 (principally of the Chippeway nation,) belonging to the Methodist Society; 16 schools have been established of more than 400 native children, who learn to read and write in the native language. All the Christian children have given up their wandering habits, and are now settling into villages; where they learn to work, and to worship the Good Spirit in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Many of my Indian brothers and sisters have already died happy in the Lord, and are gone to heaven, to see Jesus and to be with him for ever. The Great Spirit has done much for me and my brethren, whereof our hearts are made very glad. He has changed our war-whoop into songs of praise; we now delight to sing—

‘Jesus, the name that charms our fears;
That bids our sorrows cease;
’Tis music in the sinner's ears,—
’Tis life, and health, and peace!’

(Signed)
KAHKEW ã QUONABY, *alias*, PETER JONES, *Indian Missionary and Chief.*

CHRIST THE ONE THING NEEDFUL.

COMPARED with Christ, in all beside,
No comeliness I see;
The one thing needful, gracious Lord,
Is to be one with thee.

The sense of thy expiring love
Into my soul convey;
Thyself bestow—for thee alone,
My all in all, I pray.

Less than thyself will not suffice
My comforts to restore;
More than thyself I cannot crave,
And thou canst give no more.

Whate'er consists not with thy love,
O teach me to resign;
I'm rich to all intents of bliss,
If thou, O God, be mine.

CONFESSION.

LORD, when we bend before thy throne,
And our confessions pour,
Teach us to feel the sins we own,
And shun what we deplore.

When we disclose our wants in prayer,
May we our wills resign;
And not a thought our bosom share
Which is not wholly thine.

ON PRAYER.—MONTGOMERY.

PRAYER is the soul's sincere desire,
Utter'd or unexpress'd,
The motion of a hidden fire,
That trembles in the breast.

Prayer is the burden of a sigh,
The falling of a tear,
The upward glancing of an eye,
When none but God is near.

Prayer is the simplest form of speech
That infant lips can try;
Prayer the sublimest strains that reach
The Majesty on high.

Prayer is the Christian's vital breath,
The Christian's native air;
His watchword at the gates of death
He enters Heaven with prayer.

Prayer is the contrite sinner's voice,
Returning from his ways;
While angels in their songs rejoice,
And say, “Behold, he prays!”

The saints in prayer appear as one,
In word, in deed, in mind;
When with the Father and the Son
Their fellowship they find.

Nor prayer is made on earth alone;
The Holy Spirit pleads;
And Jesus, on the eternal throne,
For sinners intercedes.

O Thou! by whom we come to God,
The life, the truth, the way;
The path of Prayer Thyself hast trod—
Lord! teach us how to pray.

A CHILD'S HYMN OF PRAISE.

I THANK the goodness and the grace
Which on my birth have smil'd,
And made me, in these Christian days,
A happy English Child.

I was not born, as thousands are,
Where God was never known;
And taught to pray a useless prayer,
To blocks of wood and stone.

I was not born a little slave,
To labour in the sun;
And wish I were but in the grave,
And all my labour done!

I was not born without a home,
Or in some broken shed;
A gipsy baby, taught to roam,
And steal my daily bread.

My God, I thank thee, who hast planned
A better lot for me,
And placed me in this happy land,
Where I may hear of thee.

BE KIND TO BRUTES.

A MAN of kindness to his beast, *is* kind;
But brutal actions show a brutal mind.
Remember, he who made thee, made the brute;
Who gave thee speech and reason, formed him mute;
He can't complain, but God's omniscient eye
Beholds thy cruelty; He hears his cry.
He was designed thy servant and thy drudge,
But *know*, that *his* Creator, is *thy* Judge.

HYMN FOR A CHILD.—TAYLOR.

LORD! teach a little child to pray,
Thy grace betimes impart;
And grant thy Holy Spirit may
Renew my infant heart.

For Christ can all my sins forgive,
And wash away their stain;
And fit my soul with him to live,
And in his kingdom reign.

To him let little children come,
For he hath said they may;
His bosom then shall be their home—
Their tears he'll wipe away.

For all who early seek his face
Shall surely taste his love;
Jesus shall guide them by his grace,
To dwell with him above.

A MEEK AND QUIET SPIRIT.—An eminent servant of God, who had laboured much for the spread of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, and who had known deliverance from many temptations and sufferings, a few hours before his death expressed himself in the following words:—"There is a spirit which I feel, that delights to do no evil, nor to revenge any wrong, but delights to endure all things, in hopes to enjoy its own in the end; its hope is to out-live all wrath and contention, and to weary out all exaltation and cruelty, or whatsoever is of a nature contrary to itself; it sees to the end of all temptations; as it bears no evil in itself, so it conceives none in thought to any other; for its ground and spring are the mercies and forgiveness of God; its crown is meekness; its life is everlasting love unfeigned, and it takes its kingdom with intreaty, and not with contention, and keeps it by lowliness of mind; in God alone it can rejoice, though none else regard it, or can own its life; 'tis conceived in sorrow, and brought forth without any to pity it, nor doth it murmur at grief and oppressions; it never rejoiceth but through sufferings, for with the world's joy it is murdered. I found it alone, being forsaken: I have fellowship therein with those that lived in dens and desolate places of the earth, who, through death, obtained resurrection, and eternal holy life."

THE DYING NEGRO.—In a letter from S—— G—— to his wife, dated in Virginia, he relates a circumstance of an unusually affecting kind. Speaking of a physician, a man of religious feeling, with whose company he was pleased, he says, "This person informed me, that he was lately sent by a slaveholder to visit one of his negroes: he found the poor patient stretched on a little straw, placed on a blanket; his pulse seemed to be throbbing its last, and he was too much exhausted to utter any complaint. The master had followed the physician, and began to swear at the dying man; and told him, that as soon as he recovered he should be severely flogged for having, by his own folly, caught his sickness by attending night meetings. He was proceeding in his violent language, when the physician checked his rage, by telling him that the poor fellow could not live many minutes. The master was silent; when the dying slave, collecting the small remains of his strength, by a last effort, said, 'Glory be to thee, Oh my God! who art now taking my soul to thyself, having redeemed it,' and instantly expired."

INDIAN AT WORSHIP.—During the American war, an officer in the British army was ordered up the country with his regiment, to watch the conduct of the natives, whom they found of a peaceable disposition. One day, our young hero, walking out at sun-rising, espied at a distance in the plain, a grey-headed old man, a native, taking, as he supposed, aim at some game, and the nearer he approached, the firmer he seemed fixed upon his object. Upon coming up to him, he took him by the arm, saying, "What are you about?" The old man made no reply, but waved his hand, expressive of his desire for him to stand at a distance. This not satisfying the enquirer, he repeated the question, and received a second time the waving of the hand; at length, roused into astonishment, he said, "You old fool, what are you about?" To which he answered, "I am worshipping the Great Spirit!" The question then was, "Where is he to be found?" To which the venerable man replied, "Soldier, where is he not?" and with such energy of expression in his countenance, as made the officer confess he should never forget it to his dying day.—*Evangelical Magazine.*

THOSE that make *new ambiguous words, or unnecessary practices,* to become necessary to Church Communion, and declare all heretics that differ from them, or persecute them at least, would be more frightened from such pernicious courses, if they well knew what have been the effects of them heretofore.—*Baxter.*

ON PLEASURE.—Whatever disqualifies the mind for the performance of its Religious or Social Duties, though it assume ever so innocent a form, cannot be perfectly right.

It is the perfidious property of certain pleasures, that though they seem not to have the smallest harm in themselves, they imperceptibly indispose the mind for every thing truly good.

ON THE INFLUENCE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.—"Never did I see more need than lately of the exhortation, 'Grieve not the Spirit.' A thousand little inattentions to his admonitions are passed off as trivial things, till those admonitions, those Divine and delicate touches, no longer produce the pain which they used to excite. But the soul which is attentive to the Divine teachings, will become more and more sensible of the guiding eye, the leading hand, the directing voice, which say to those who are wishful not to rest in any thing short of it, 'The anointing which ye have received of Him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you; but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in Him.' And, truly, I see no other way of profiting by all I meet with, whether means, or friends, or providences, or whatever else, but to get under the Spirit's influence."—*Francis Payson.*

HOWEL HARRIS.—"When Mr. Howel Harris began his itinerant preaching in South Wales, which was some years before the Messrs. Wesley visited that part of the country, Mr Gwynne was alarmed at his conduct; and imagining that this Howel Harris might be an incendiary in church and state, he, being a magistrate, determined to put an end to these portentous irregularities. For this purpose he sallied out one day; but said to his lady on going, "I will hear the man myself, before I commit him." The sermon was so truly evangelical, so calculated to arouse the careless, to alarm the wicked, and to encourage the penitent, and the preacher's manner was so zealous and affectionate, that Mr Gwynne thought he resembled one of the apostles. He was so convinced of the purity of his doctrines, and of the benevolence of his motives, that at the end of the discourse he went up to Howel Harris, shook him by the hand, told him how much he had been misled by slanderous reports; avowed his intention of committing him, had they been true; asked his pardon; and, to the amazement of the assembly, entreated him to accompany him back to Garth to supper. Mrs Gwynne, his lady, was a worthy woman, endowed with a superior understanding, and distinguished by her love of the poor, whom she supplied regularly with food, clothing, and medicine; but she had the strong prejudices of birth and fortune. She was one of six heiresses, each of whom had £30,000 for their portion, and had married into opulent families. She was a violent enemy to all Presbyterians; and when her husband returned, introducing to her Howel Harris, whom she deemed a man of inferior class, an innovator in the church, and a rebel to the king,—when she heard Mr Gwynne himself, in the presence of his whole family, entreat his forgiveness, acknowledge his error, and pay him great respect,—she thought that her poor husband must have lost his senses; and in grief and consternation she quitted the room, nor would return to it till after supper, and till Howel Harris had departed. It is gratifying, however, to add, that such was the effect of Mr H.'s piety, that Mrs Gwynne became reconciled to him; the family became devoted to God; their house was thrown open to the minister of Christ, and their daughter became the wife of Mr Charles Wesley. She died but a few years ago, at the advanced age of ninety-six.

An Indian, being among his white neighbours, asked for a little tobacco to smoke, and one of them, having some loose in his pocket, gave him a handful. The following day, the Indian came back, enquiring for the donor, saying he had found a quarter of a dollar among the tobacco. Being told that, as it was given him, he might as well keep it, he answered, pointing to his breast, "I got a good man and a bad man here; and the good man say it a'nt mine, I must return it to the owner; the bad man say, why, he gave it you, and it is your own now: the good man say, that not right,—the tobacco is yours, not the money: the bad man say, never mind, you got it, go buy some dram: the good man say no: so I don't know what to do, and I think I go to sleep; but the good man and the bad man keep talking all night and trouble me, and now I bring the money I feel good."

Integrity.—John Cooke.—"A gentleman of very respectable appearance called rather early one morning at the house of the late Rev. John Cooke, of Maidenhead, and requested to see him. As soon as Mr Cooke entered the room, he said, "Sir, I am an entire stranger to you, and it is business of no very pleasant or ordinary kind that has brought me to Maidenhead. Some years ago, an estate was purchased, for which an adequate value was given at the time. But I find, on looking over the deeds, that although it has been in the possession of my family many years, the sale is not valid, nor my title good, until it is signed by one John Cooke, who was at the time of sale a minor. After much search, by the aid of my legal advisers, I have ascertained that you are that John Cooke; and now it depends on you, whether what my father honourably purchased, but your father dishonestly sold, shall continue in the possession of my family or not." The gentleman then most frankly opened, and exposed to Mr Cooke a bundle of parchments, containing all the particulars of the sale, with the deeds that had been executed. At the time of this application, the estate, it is believed, was worth between three and four hundred pounds per annum. Mr Cooke, after looking over the writings, replied to the following effect:—"Sir, I feel for the situation in which you are placed. The estate is the just right of myself and family, and, in point of law, I could dispossess you and your family; but as I am satisfied, that whatever injustice has been practised on the part of the seller, you have acted honourably in the purchase, and have actually paid to another the price of what is mine; to set your mind at rest, I will affix my signature, although by doing so I shall alienate from my family what they ought to possess. I do so, sir, under the influence of those principles which the Gospel teaches me, and humbly depending upon the care, and wisdom, and bounty of that heavenly Father who took me up from my youth, who has always supplied my necessities, and on whose promise I rely, that he will give me all things needful for life and godliness." He then affixed his signature and seal to the title deeds. The gentleman went away amazed at his nobleness of mind, and admiring those principles which had induced him so generously to concede all he could have desired, without even hinting at the necessity of a compromise, or asking any compensation."

WHAT RUINED THE CHURCH?—IT was the Bishops striving who should be greatest, and turning *single churches* into *associations of many churches*, that their power and wealth might be enlarged with their territories, and the turning of *arbitrating* Bishops into the Common Judicatures, which must govern all Christians, and such like, which poisoned the church.—*Baxter.*

We read, that when a Heathen surprised a Christian, and beat him with much cruelty, and with great scorn asked him, "What great wonder his Master, Christ, ever did?" The Believer replied, "Even this great miracle, that though thou usest me thus cruelly, I can heartily forgive thee!"

PERFECT, AS GOD IS PERFECT.—By aspiring to be like God in *power*, the angels transgressed and fell; by aspiring to be like God in *knowledge*, man transgressed and fell; but, by aspiring to the similitude of God in *goodness* or *love*, neither man nor angel ever transgressed, or shall transgress, for unto that imitation are we called. —*Lord Bacon.*

A HINT.—IT often happens in controversy that writers misunderstand each other's words, and suppose each other to say what they never intended to say. I think this evil might be prevented, if people were willing to prevent it, in a very simple way. Whenever a person is intending to publish an answer to any publication, I should recommend him first to submit his answer privately to the author of the publication, with a request that, if in any case his words have been misunderstood, he would give such explanations as might set the matter in its proper light. Indeed it would not be amiss, where such a thing is practicable, for the whole controversy to be carried on privately, before being submitted to the public. If, in cases of difference of opinion, persons would ask and give explanations privately, in correspondence with each other, a vast amount of tedious writing might be prevented, and far greater service be rendered both to truth and charity, than is usually done in debates. A friend publishes a pamphlet in which there are some things which appear to me to be erroneous, as I understand them. Would it not be best, before I publish a reply, to write and ask the author whether I have *rightly* understood his meaning; and if I have, give him my reasons for thinking his statements erroneous? If he gives me satisfaction, there *needs* no reply: if he does *not* give satisfaction, I am in a better situation for setting the subject in a proper light before the public. Such a correspondence, conducted in a kind and generous manner, would tend to enlighten the minds of both parties, as well as to promote the exercise of genuine Christian charity.

We have seen another pamphlet, written against the pamphlet entitled "Water Baptism," but it does not appear to us to require any answer. The writer speaks very bitterly of the author of "Water Baptism," and represents him as utterly unfit for Christian society, and yet curious enough, he declares Abraham Scott, who writes on the same side as himself, to be more deserving of Church censure than the author of "Water Baptism." Thus, three pamphlets have come to hand, all on one side, all written against the pamphlet called "*Water Baptism*," and yet all these three pamphlets are as much in opposition to each other, as they are in opposition to the pamphlet against which they are all written. And thus it is with the advocates of sprinkling and immersion generally; we have not met with two that are perfectly agreed on the subject; and yet, strange to say, though they cannot agree on any other point, they still agree to speak harshly of the person who happens to believe them all in error. Though so lost and bewildered in pleading for the obligation of Baptism with water, yet they all agree to represent the man who believes the only baptism now binding on Christians to be the renovation of the soul, as an Infidel. We still need a little more charity: I hope we shall shortly have it.

INTELLIGENCE.

The friends at Stalybridge have formed themselves into a Congregational Christian Church, and invited Samuel Sayce, Missionary in Ireland, to reside amongst them, and become their pastor. Samuel Sayce has accepted the invitation, given up his connexion with the Conference, and expressed his intention to commence his ministerial labours among them to-morrow, the 5th inst. The church is supposed to number about two hundred members. They worship, for the present, in the Temperance Hall; a large and commodious place, capable of holding about a thousand people.

Mottram and Newton churches have engaged Thos. Sturges to reside among them, and be their pastor.

J. Barker visited the south last month, and held meetings, and delivered lectures on Evangelical Reform, at Pudsey, Bradford, Halifax, Longton, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Burslem, Stoke, Tunstall, Hanley, and Manchester. He also preached at Holme-Lane, Oldham, Stalybridge, Dukinfield, Hyde, and Mossley. The audiences in every place were very large, and in some cases amounted to two or three thousand individuals. At Longton, Burslem, Tunstall, and Hanley, the meetings were held out of doors. No opposition was offered to the lecturer by the friends of Conference, except at Hanley and Manchester; and even there the opposition offered was not to the principles and facts advanced by the lecturer in his lectures, but chiefly to passages and expressions in pamphlets on the Conference controversy. The meetings were very orderly and attentive, and a favourable impression appeared to be made upon the minds of great numbers. Vast multitudes appear to be receiving clearer, more correct, and more comprehensive views of the religion of Christ. Right views of Christian liberty, of peace, of temperance, and of liberality, are spreading very rapidly, and an important revolution seems to be near.

The Gateshead friends have resolved to invite some one to come and live among them as their pastor, or as the superintendent of the circuit.

A number of friends at South Shields have opened a chapel for worship, and are receiving a supply of preachers from Gateshead and Newcastle. On the 12th of last month, J. Barker preached there,—the chapel, which holds about three hundred people, was full.

The following is from Huddersfield:

Dear Friends,—In order to ascertain what were the feelings and views of those who had withdrawn themselves, or had declared their intention to separate, from the Methodist New Connexion Conference, in the Huddersfield Circuit, a number of friends took a room, and invited all such persons to meet together, and, in a friendly manner, consider and talk over the matter. Their desire was to bring the scattered remnants to form one compact body for their mutual good; and obtain a concentration of energy and effort for the advancement of the cause of Christ. The meeting took place on July the 18th, in a school-room in Spring-street, Huddersfield, at two o'clock in the afternoon. The place, though not small, was crowded to inconvenience. The time of the meeting was occupied by the consideration of various topics relating to the Conference and the present state of the church. At near five o'clock the business of the meeting was adjourned to July 25th, when the friends again met. A number of resolutions were submitted to the meeting, and passed unanimously, to the effect,—1. That the Sacred Scriptures are a sufficient rule of faith and practice. 2. That no person or persons have any right to impose on others their interpretations of divine truth, or to require men in any thing to act contrary to their own convictions of what is God's will respecting them. 3. That each Christian Church should be free, but that free or independent Churches ought to unite and co-operate for their mutual profit, and for the conversion of the world to Christ.

The other resolutions were chiefly expressive of disapprobation of the proceedings of the late Conference,—of confidence in the expelled ministers, and of a determination to support them in their endeavours to promote the thorough reformation of the Church, and the speedy conversion of the world.

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HOW TO PREVENT FORGETFULNESS.

" *A forgetful hearer.*"—JAMES I. 25.

I am wishful now to tell you what course you ought to take in order that your memory in divine things may be improved.

A RIGHT UNDERSTANDING OF THINGS ASSISTS THE MEMORY.

1. The first advice that I would give you on this subject is, to endeavour to obtain a clear and correct understanding of what you hear. It is almost impossible for a man to remember what he does not understand. If I were to hear a sermon in Welsh, I should not remember a single word, because I should have no understanding of the preacher's meaning; but if I were to hear the same sermon in English, I might remember the whole with ease. I have seen in books numbers of Arabic and Syriac words, but I have no recollection of one of them, because I never understood them. If I were to say to my hearers that, *virtus et vitœ tranquillitatem largitur, et terrorem mortis tollit,* they would not remember a word, because they would not understand it: but if I were to say that "*virtue both gives tranquillity to life, and takes away the fear of death,*" they would be able to remember it with ease, because they would have a clear idea of the meaning. And so it is with things generally. One reason why we can remember a thing better when we see it, than when we merely hear a description of it is, because we better understand what we see, than what we merely hear. A person might give me a description of a mountain, a valley, a building, or a town, and I should forget part of his description before the whole was completed, and a great part of the remainder would probably be gone in the course of an hour: but let me see and examine the mountain or the valley, the building or the town, and I shall remember them as long as I live. Most people have felt, perhaps, when seeking a strange place, how difficult it is, when a person is telling one the road, to remember his instructions. "You must take the lane," says he, "till you come at an old barn, then go through the fields till you come to some houses; you must then cross a bridge, go through a wood, and the place will be right before you." But before he has got to the end of his story, we have forgot the beginning, and are almost as ill-prepared for our journey as before. But let the person take us a little up the hill, and instead of *telling* us the way, let him *show* it to us: let him point out to us the lane, the barn, the fields, the houses, and the wood, and we can find our way with ease; there will be very little danger of forgetfulness then.

The difficulty of remembering without understanding is noticed by Christ in the parable of the sower. "When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and *understandeth it not,* then cometh the wicked one and catcheth away that which is sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way-side." Hence the Redeemer's exhortation to his disciples, that they should *take heed* how they heard; and hence, too, the propriety of the question which he proposed to them after he had been preaching to them, "Have ye *understood* all these things?" Matt. xiii. 19, 13, 51. If, therefore, we wish to be able to retain in our memory what we hear from the pulpit, we must labour to understand it well: we must labour to have a clear and distinct impression of all that the preacher may declare. Without this the preacher will be unto us but as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

I know there are cases in which it is impossible for persons to understand a preacher; there are cases in which preachers do not understand themselves. I have heard preachers myself who have preached for nearly an hour together, and yet there has scarce been one sound, clear, definite idea in the whole discourse. There are multitudes who preach merely for the sake of preaching, or for the sake of the honour or earthly advantage connected with the ministry. They cannot *teach* the religion of Christ, for they have never *learnt* it. They have learnt the use of certain words and phrases, and they can repeat them; but as for giving clear and correct ideas of Christian truth and duty, they do no such thing. It is the same with books. I have read whole books on religion, without finding a single particle of pure intelligible Gospel doctrine from beginning to end. Some preachers have considerable knowledge, but they are accustomed to preach in such a laboured, difficult style,—they use such great hard words, and such long and round-about and confused sentences, that instead of making the truth plain, they wrap it up in clouds and darkness. The only remedy which hearers have in such cases as these, is to leave the minister to those who can profit from him, and seek for themselves a minister of another description.

But there are other cases in which preachers are plain and instructive in their discourses, and yet a number of their hearers do not understand them: they obtain no clear, and orderly, and distinct ideas of what they teach. Sometimes they *sleep* while the minister is preaching; and at other times they are so dull and stupid that they cannot pay attention. Some persons make the Sabbath a feasting day: and eat and drink more freely on that day, than on any other; and by pampering the flesh, they so overburden the soul, as to render it utterly unfit for any thing good. Others come to a place of worship with hearts full of covetousness, and while the minister is speaking the word of life, their thoughts are busily running after bargains, and gold. Others come under the influence of pride and vanity, and while the minister of Christ unfolds the glories of eternity, their thoughts are occupied with themselves, or with the dress and appearances of those around them. Others are lost in foolish reveries, and wild and reckless flights of a lawless imagination. One while they are in America, sailing on the lakes; and then they are in Africa, rolling through the deserts; and then they are they know not where, diverting their ill-regulated minds with mad dreams of future wealth and greatness. When people allow their attention to be diverted by the follies of earth, instead of fixing their whole souls on the word of life, it is impossible that they should rightly understand what is said: it is impossible they should be any other than forgetful hearers. If men would understand and remember the word of life, they should come with prepared hearts, and they should listen with devout attention.

If persons would understand what they hear from the pulpit, they should study religion at home. The more knowledge any man possesses, the more rapidly can he acquire still further knowledge. Many a one is unable to understand what he hears, in consequence of his not having previously paid attention to the first branches of the subject. And many are unable to understand ministers, in consequence of not having previously acquainted themselves with the simple facts of Scripture history. If men wish to learn in the chapel, they should try to learn a little before they come. They should read their Bibles. The better they are acquainted with the Sacred Scriptures, the better will they be able to understand what they hear from the preacher. Reading the Scriptures and hearing sermons help each other. Reading the Scriptures prepares us better to understand our ministers, and having a godly and well instructed minister enables us to profit more by the Sacred Scriptures. The Sacred Scriptures should be our daily companion, if we would not be forgetful hearers. In reading the Scriptures through the week, you will frequently have light poured upon them by what you heard on the Sabbath; and in hearing the word on the Sabbath, you will be prepared to understand and relish it the more by what you have read through the week before. Both your understandings and memories will be helped in this way.

And you should read other books as well. The Bible is the richest and the best of books, and ought to be the principal subject of our study; but it ought not to be the only subject of our study. We ought, as we have opportunity, to study the writings of pious and able men. The writings of such men as Baxter, and Law, and Wesley, and Penn, can hardly fail to assist us in obtaining a clearer and fuller view of divine truth. It is almost impossible for a person to read attentively what Baxter has written on the Everlasting Rest of the Saints, without understanding better what the Scriptures say respecting Heaven. It is next to impossible for a person to read attentively Baxter's Crucifixion of the World by the Cross of Christ, and Wesley's Discourses on the Danger of Riches and the Use of Money, without being assisted in obtaining a clearer and fuller view of the meaning of what the Scriptures teach on these subjects. It is next to impossible for a person to read attentively Baxter's Life of Faith, and his Christian Directory, Dymond on Morality, and the Practical Discourses of John Wesley, without being better prepared to understand the moral principles of the Gospel generally. And so with other books and other branches of Christian knowledge. All that have the opportunity ought to procure for themselver a number of such books as those of Baxter, and Wesley, and Law, and Dymond, and make them the companions of their life. Good books should be considered a necessary part of household furniture; and every one should use his best endeavours to obtain a tolerable supply of them. We should not like to do without furniture for the accommodation of our bodies, and we ought not to be willing to do without a little furniture for the mind. It is altogether unreasonable to treat man as a mere animal; it is unreasonable to be so anxious to have every possible accommodation for the body, and yet to be careless respecting the necessary accommodations of the mind. I would sooner have a few less chairs, or a plainer clock, a rougher, homelier table, or a coarser, harder bed, than I would be without a supply of good religious books.

And books are very plentiful, and tolerably cheap; they are almost within every one's reach more or less; and they are likely to be cheaper and more plentiful still. If you would improve your understandings, and so prepare yourselves for hearing the word of life to the greatest advantage, get a supply of them, and, in conjunction with your Bible, make them your daily study. By the constant exercise of your mental powers, acquire a clear and ready perception, and you will find it comparatively easy to remember what you hear.

A LIVELY INTEREST IN THINGS ASSISTS THE MEMORY.

2. Again, if we would not be forgetful hearers, it is necessary that we should feel *interested* in what we hear. We readily remember those things in which we feel a peculiar interest; but things in which we do *not* feel interested, are remembered with the greatest difficulty. If a person should tell you how many acres of land there are in the various parishes in Devonshire, and proceed to describe the nature of the soil, and the character of the buildings in each parish, there is not one in a hundred of you perhaps that would remember his statements a single hour; because you would feel no interest in them. But if I should inform you that one of those parishes had been left to you by *Will*, the state of the case would be quite changed. You would open your ears and eyes at once; you

would listen to the description of its soil and buildings with the most eager interest, and you would, in consequence, remember my statements with the greatest ease. I might begin to tell you how many children I had seen on my way from Newcastle to Shields, and describe their dresses and complexions, and none of you would remember what I said, because none of you, perhaps, would feel interested in the matter. But suppose that one of you, some weeks ago, had lost a child, and that I happened to describe, among the rest, the dress, the age, the height, the hair, and the complexion of the lost little one, there would be no danger of you forgetting what I said then; your soul would feel too much interested in the description to allow you to forget a single word. Nothing is much harder to remember, perhaps, than a Will or an Act of Parliament; and yet if I were to read to you a Will or an Act of Parliament conveying to you some large amount of wealth, or some high privilege, the Will or the Act of Parliament would not be all forgotten. And so it is generally. When we feel no interest in what we hear, it is difficult even to try to remember: but when what we hear excites our feelings and affections, and awakens a lively interest in us, we remember without an effort.

If, then, you would not be forgetful hearers of the word of life, beware of listlessness and carelessness in reference to the great subjects of which that word treats. If you wish to remember what you hear, you must seek to be alive to your spiritual and eternal interests. A prisoner does not forget the time appointed for his deliverance: the slave does not forget the promise of his freedom: and we should not forget the words of life, if we felt that interest in them which we ought.

The religion of Christ has every thing in it to awaken our interest. It reveals to us ourselves: it tells us what we are, and whence we sprang, and wherefore we were made. It reveals to us our heavenly Father, unfolds his character, throws light on all his wondrous works, and makes known to us the plans and purposes of his eternal love. It brings a better world in view, and reveals to us its boundless and eternal blessedness. It tells us the strange and affecting story of redemption, how he that was rich, for our sakes became poor; that we, through his poverty, might be rich. It is an Act of the council of heaven, conveying to us privileges of the highest rank, and trusts and honours of the most honourable description. It is a Will sealed with the blood of him that made it, bequeathing to us uncounted treasures, together with an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away. It tells where our rich and incorruptible inheritance is situated, and where we are to look for our treasures, and what steps we should take to obtain possession of them. It tells us also of blessings provided for our whole race, and encourages us to bring along with us, to the worlds of light, our wives and children, and the whole family of man. Our interests both for time and eternity are wrapped up in religion, and the interests of the whole world as well. If our minds are not excited with matters like these, what shall excite them? If our minds do not feel interested in matters like these, we are in a most deplorable state, and it is time for us to arouse ourselves. We ought to feel more interest in the truths of religion, than in all things else. If we would use our reason,—if we would consider our present situation, and look forward to that which is before us,—if we would allow the great essential truths of religion to have their proper influence upon our souls, it is impossible but that we should be so affected and excited with respect to our higher and eternal interests, as to be enabled to remember what we may hear or read respecting our duty, and other branches of the religion of Christ, with ease.

CONVERSING ON THINGS ASSISTS THE MEMORY.

3. Again, it would tend to assist us in remembering what we hear, if we were, after we have heard it, to make it the subject of conversation with others. I can always remember best those anecdotes which I have once or twice repeated. If I hear things, and do not mention them again, I forget them quickly; but if I have occasion to mention

them a number of times, they seem to be printed in my memory for ever. I have heard of some person, who, when he wished to fix any thing firmly in his memory, used to repeat it over and over to the trees of the wood: I knew a person myself, who used to speak aloud his own thoughts in the fields, for the same purpose. We ought to pursue a somewhat similar plan with respect to the word of life. We have no need to repeat the things which we hear to the fields and woods, but we may repeat them to our friends, to our neighbours, and to our children. We have no need to indulge in uncharitable censures of what we have heard, nor need we run into loose and unprofitable disputation; but we may interchange our solid and profitable thoughts with each other. We ought especially to speak to our own families of the good things which we have heard. Under the Old Testament dispensation something like this was commanded. "And these words which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt *talk of them* when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up." If this plan were followed now, it would not only cure multitudes of forgetful hearers, but exert a salutary influence upon the minds of our children, our friends, and our connexions generally. What a vast deal better it would be than spending our time and breath in folly or evil-speaking. It is true, such a course would not be quite fashionable; but I see no reason why we should not *make* it fashionable. If you wish to improve your memory in divine things, adopt this plan. Talk to your wife and children, and talk to your friends whenever you have a suitable opportunity, of every good thing you hear, and of every good thing you read. If you cannot repeat the whole of a discourse or book, repeat what you can. By thus communicating what you learn to others, you will both better understand and better remember it yourselves. When we give away money, we have so much less left for ourselves: but when we give away knowledge, our stock is increased. The orderly communication of our religious knowledge to others, exerts a favourable influence upon all the powers of our souls. It not only improves the memory, and invigorates and quickens the understanding, but tends to give new power and activity to every holy and benevolent affection.

WRITING THINGS DOWN ASSISTS THE MEMORY.

4. Another plan which it would be well for persons to adopt, if they would not be forgetful hearers, is to *write down* what they hear. There is scarcely anything that is better calculated to fix things in our memory, than the plan of writing them down. Writing them down both tends to fix things in our memory, and enables us, by referring to our papers, to recal them to our minds, in case we should forget them. After I had been speaking on this subject lately, a friend told me, that if he neglected to write things down, he was almost sure to let them slip; but that when once he had written them down, they were secure enough, though he were never to look at the paper on which he had written them more. The act of writing them on paper, engraved them so deeply on his mind, that he had no need for the paper record. There is a new way of writing, which they call *manifold* writing. Things are so contrived, that while a man writes upon one sheet, the impression goes through to another sheet placed underneath. And so it is with writing down what we read and hear. While we seem to be writing on paper merely, we are, in reality, writing on our minds as well—making a paper record for the eye, and taking at the same time a copy on the memory for the mind.

I had once a very bad memory myself, but now my memory is tolerably good; and I attribute the improvement, in a great measure, to my constant habit of keeping a written record of such things as I was wishful to remember. I have followed this plan now for sixteen or eighteen years, and I can speak of its usefulness with the greatest confidence. I followed it in every branch of learning to which I gave my attention, and I consider myself indebted to it, in a great measure, for whatever success I have met with in my studies. Writing helps the memory in various ways. It fixes the attention more closely on subjects, and *that* helps the memory: it makes us understand subjects much better, and that helps the memory: it makes us more familiar with the words in which thoughts are expressed, and that also helps the memory. It has also the same advantages as talking the subject over, except that it cannot be done so quickly; and it has some advantages which talking a subject over has not.

And writing is an art which all may acquire. It would be more difficult for some to get into the way of writing down what they hear than others; but the difficulty might be overcome in every case by diligence and perseverance. Some would not be able to write much, but they might write a little; and if it were ever so little, it would amount to a great deal in course of time, if it were done regularly. Those who could not write down the substance of the whole sermon, might write down two or three leading thoughts; and those who could not write down any portion of the sermon, might write down the text, or a portion of the Scripture lessons. Any person might transcribe a few passages of Scripture once a day or once a week. And suppose a person to write down and fix in his memory one plain practical portion of the sacred writings a day, he would, in the course of a year, have got lodged in his soul three hundred and sixty-five such passages. In twenty years the number of passages, thus written down and committed to memory, would amount to more than seven thousand. That would be a very considerable portion of the plainer and more important parts of the whole Bible. And it is my belief that there is not one in ten but might do this, if they would begin early in life, and make a fair and persevering trial. If men could have a wedge of gold for every passage of Scripture committed to memory, we should have ten or a dozen committed to memory every day by many: and yet the advantages resulting from the faithful and pious remembrance of divine truth, would be worth more than a world of gold.

Some have very stiff hands, and when they begin to write, their fingers are soon cramped; but even those might master the difficulty by perseverance. Let them write a little daily, and their fingers will in time become more pliable. Some cannot *read* what they write; but this difficulty also will vanish in time. Writing becomes as plain to people as print, in the course of a few years. Some are discouraged because they are so *slow* in writing, but this defect also may be remedied by practice. I recollect the time when it took me seven or eight hours to write as much as I can now write in fifteen or twenty minutes. Every person should learn to write, and every person should employ the art for the improvement of his memory in the things of God. I would have both males and females thus to practise the art of writing. Why should not females be as well instructed in divine things as men? Why should not their minds be as well stored with truth? In Christ Jesus there is no distinction between male and female; and no distinction, which would tend to discourage the intellectual and religious improvement of females, ought to be acknowledged amongst us. Let all use the art of writing, and let all gather together the most copious treasures of divine truth in their power. I do not say that you should write while you are *hearing* the word; that would neither be the most seemly nor the most profitable plan in general. The best course in general would be, to listen while the minister is speaking, and to make a record of his observations on our return to our homes.

REDUCING THINGS TO PRACTICE ASSISTS THE MEMORY.

5. Another thing, which is necessary to enable us properly to remember what we hear is, to reduce what we hear to practice. The end for which the Gospel is sent is, to renovate our souls and our character; and if it does not do this, it will, instead of doing us any good, only add to our guilt and wretchedness. Memory, therefore, is to be subservient to practice. But while memory is calculated to aid us in practising what we hear, practising what we hear tends to fix it indelibly in the

memory. This point is illustrated by James, in the passage connected with our text:—"Receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls. But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only. For if any man be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass; for he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway *forgetteth* what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed." James i., 22, &c. If we would remember what we hear or read, the Apostle would have us to reduce it to practice instantly. As people look into a glass to see whether all be right about their persons; so would he have us to look into the glass of the Gospel, to see whether all be right in our souls and in our lives. As people, who are anxious about their appearance, are ready, when they discover a spot on their faces, to remove it instantly, before they leave the glass; so the Apostle would have us, the moment we see any fault or failing in our souls or in our outward deportment, to rectify it at once. As a person that should neglect to remove the spot from her face while looking in the glass, would be likely to forget it altogether after she went away and engaged in her daily occupations, so would the Apostle have us to understand, that if we neglect to reduce to practice the Gospel of Christ when it comes home to our consciences, we shall be likely to forget what we have heard, and so lose the benefit of the Gospel altogether. And what the Apostle says is strictly true. There is the greatest danger possible of forgetting those things which we refuse to reduce to practice. People do not *like* to remember what they refuse to practise; it is exceedingly painful to them. There is nothing in the world so unpleasant as the thought of neglected duty. How uncomfortable it makes us to think of a person to whom we should have written a letter, or for whom we had promised to do some service, when we have neglected to write the letter, or to do the promised service! And it is as uncomfortable to think of God and of his law, when we have neglected to do God's will. But when we have *written* the letter, or *done* the service requested, how pleasant we feel: the remembrance of duty discharged is sweeter than life. If we wish to remember the truth, let us so live that the remembrance of the truth may be pleasant to us. The wicked both forget and disbelieve the truth; because the truth is a terror to them; it condemns their wicked ways. The thought of God and duty troubles them; and they therefore say to God, Depart from us; we desire not the knowledge of thy ways. And it is the same with professors of religion, in proportion as they are unfaithful to duty. There is nothing can make the remembrance of God's word always pleasant to them, but the faithful discharge of duty as it is revealed to the mind.

Again, practice has a *direct* tendency to fix things in our memory. If I were to hear a lecture on farming, or book-keeping, or shoemaking, without attempting to reduce the lecture to practice, I should neither be able to understand nor remember the lecture. But if, as soon as I heard each part of the lecture, I should set to work and put it properly in practice, it would probably be fixed in my memory for ever. And so with religion. A man may hear sermons on temperance, on self-denial, and on charity, for years together, and still have no clear and distinct understanding or remembrance of what he has heard, unless his heart be moved to reduce to practice what he hears. But let him once set fairly to work to practise what he hears, and he will write it upon his heart as with a pen of iron. If we would not be *forgetful hearers*, we must take care not to be "*hearers only*," but "*doers of the work.*"

ASSISTANCE TO THE MEMORY MAY BE OBTAINED BY PRAYER.

6. Another means which we ought to employ in order to obtain a better memory in the things of God is prayer. If we pray to God to assist and strengthen our souls generally, why may we not humbly beseech him to assist and strengthen our

memories in particular. We are encouraged to pray for wisdom, and knowledge; and memory is the grand treasury in which the stores of wisdom and knowledge are laid up.

Prayer will tend to assist our remembrance of divine truth in various ways. In answer to prayer, we have reason to expect a clearer and fuller understanding of what we read and hear; and that will assist the memory. We have reason to expect that in answer to prayer, God will make us more sensible of our spiritual wants, and of the great importance of eternal things, and so cause us to feel a livelier interest in the things which we read and hear; and this also will greatly assist our remembrance of them. God will enable us, in answer to prayer, to carry out the good things which we hear and read more fully into practice: and this also will make it easier for us to remember them. We ought to pray before we come to hear, and we ought to pray while we are hearing; we "ought always to pray, and never faint."

If those who attend our places of worship will follow these directions, they shall not hear the Gospel in vain. However forgetful they may be at present, they shall soon find the stores of religious knowledge in their souls begin to increase. And if they will walk by this rule for a few years, they shall find themselves, by the blessing of heaven, beginning to abound in knowledge and in all judgment. Let the advice we have given be faithfully followed by all who sit under the ministry of the word, and the church will grow in knowledge and in holiness abundantly, and become, far beyond all that it has been for generations past, the light and the glory of the whole earth.

My dear friends, if you would prosper in piety,—if you would enjoy a fulness of spiritual blessings in your own souls,—if you would be stable in the hour of trial,—if you would be comforted in the time of affliction and sorrow,—if you would be rich in faith, in knowledge, and in love, and if you would be well prepared to enrich your poor and perishing fellow-men,—if you would be ornaments to the church, and if you would be blessings to the world, "*Take heed how ye hear.*" Welcome the word of life to your souls, and keep it there as you would keep your life. It *is* your life: it is the seed and germ of *eternal* life: your eternal all depends upon it. "TAKE HEED, THEREFORE, HOW YE HEAR."

QUESTIONS FOR THE INVESTIGATOR.

Ought not the followers of Christ to be one? Did not Christ intend them to be one? Are they not commanded in the New Testament to be one? In what respects ought they to be one? Is it possible for them all to be brought to hold the same opinions on all points? Is it possible for them all to be brought to adopt exactly the same modes of worship, or the same plans of benevolent operation in all things? Is it possible, or is it desirable to bring all the followers of Christ to be one under any earthly head? Is that unity of Christ's followers, for which the church of Rome contends, the unity which Christians ought to seek? Is it desirable to bring about a union of all Christ's followers under the authority of any human creed, or of any human laws or authority? What are the great hindrances to that union of Christ's followers which the New Testament requires? What course ought we to pursue in order to bring about the union of all believers?

We think the preceding questions worthy of the serious consideration of our readers: we shall be glad if they will try to answer them. There is certainly a great deal said about union in the New Testament, and it is time we tried to learn what it is that the New Testament means by what it says on this subject. It cannot be right for us to leave a number of Christ's precepts unconsidered. If we would be *Christians*, we ought to do whatever Christ has commanded us; and we cannot properly obey commands which we do not understand. Let all of us who have the opportunity, examine the New Testament for ourselves, and communicate our views to each other, and we shall be glad, by means of the Investigator, to communicate the result to our readers.

Adam Clarke.—A very respectable linen merchant in Coleraine offered Adam Clarke, when a youth, a situation in his warehouse, which was accepted by him with the consent of his parents. Mr. B—— knew well that his clerk and overseer was a religious man, but he was not sensible of the extent of principle which actuated him. Some differences arose at times about the way of conducting the business, which were settled pretty amicably. But the time of the great Dublin market approached, and Mr. B—— was busy preparing for it. The master and man were together in the folding-room, when one of the pieces was found short of the required number of yards. "Come," says Mr. B——, "it is but a trifle. We shall soon stretch it, and make out the yard. Come, Adam, take one end and pull against me." Adam had neither ears nor heart for the proposal, and absolutely refused to do what he thought a dishonest thing. A long argument and expostulation followed, in which the usages of the trade were strongly and variously enforced; but all in vain. Adam kept to his text, resolving rather to suffer than sin. Mr. B—— was therefore obliged to call for one of his men less scrupulous, and Adam retired quietly to his desk. These things may be counted little in the life of such a man; but not so in the sight of God. Soon after, Mr. B——, in the kindest manner, informed his "young friend," as he seemed always proud to call him, that it was very clear he was not fit for worldly business, and wished him to look out for some employment more congenial to his own mind; adding, that he might depend on his friendship in any line of life into which he should enter.

A Servant in London.—A person who dined at an eating-house in the borough, was lamenting that he had lost, on the preceding day, a five pound note, of which he did not know the number. The servant girl, who waited at the table, said she had found the note, and immediately restored it. It was with difficulty she was prevailed on to accept one pound as a reward for her honesty and candour.

A Russian Cottager.—The following interesting anecdote occurs in a German work, entitled "A Picture of St. Petersburgh." In a town, five miles from St. Petersburgh, lived a poor German woman. A small cottage was her only possession, and the visits of a few shipmasters, on their way to Petersburgh, her only livelihood. Several Dutch shipmasters having stopped at her house one evening, she found, when they were gone, a sealed bag of money under the table. Some one of the company had no doubt forgotten it, but they had sailed over to Cronstadt, and the wind being fair, there was no chance of their putting back. The woman put the bag into the cupboard, to keep it till it should be called for. Full seven years, however, elapsed, and no one claimed it; and though often tempted by opportunity, and oftener by want, to make use of the contents, the poor woman's good principles prevailed, and it remained untouched. One evening some shipmasters again stopped at her house for refreshment. Three of them were English, the fourth a Dutchman. Conversing on various matters, one of them asked the Dutchman if he had ever been in that town before. "Indeed I have," replied he, "I know the place too well; my being here cost me once seven hundred rubles." "How so?" "Why, in one of these wretched hovels, I once left behind me a bag of rubles." "Was the bag sealed?" asked the old woman, who was sitting in a corner of the room, and whose attention was aroused by the subject. "Yes, yes, it was sealed, and with this very seal here at my watch chain." The woman knew the seal instantly. "Well then," said she, "by that you may recover what you have lost." "Recover it, mother! No, no, I am rather too old to expect that: the world is not quite so honest; besides, it is full seven years since I lost the money;—say no more about it, it always makes me melancholy." Meanwhile, the woman slipped out, and presently returned with the bag. "See here," said she, "honesty is not so rare, perhaps, as you imagine;" and she threw the bag on the table.

A Watchmaker.—A gentleman one day conversing with a watchmaker upon the dishonest practices of persons in his way of business, was thus addressed by him: "Sir, I served my apprenticeship with a man who did not fear God, and who, consequently, was not very scrupulous in the charges which he made to his customers. He used frequently to call me a fool, and tell me I should die in a workhouse when, in his absence, I used to make such charges as appeared to me fair and honest. In course of time I set up in business for myself, and have been so successful as never to have wanted a shilling; whilst my master, who used to reproach me for my honesty, became so reduced in his circumstances, as to apply to me for a couple of guineas: and did, at length, himself actually die in the workhouse.

M. Roussel.—M. Drouillard, collector of taxes for the arrondissement of Condom, father of a numerous family, happening to arrive very late in the evening in the town of Auch, on his way to the receiver-general, in order to convey to that gentleman the sum of six thousand francs in specie, found, on his arrival there, that he had lost the bag containing the money he thus intended to pay. Though the unfortunate man caused immediate search to be made, no trace of the lost treasure could be discovered. The next morning he applied to a friend for the loan of a horse, in order to be able to pursue his inquiries with more effect; but his friend's horse happening to be out, that gentleman went himself to a neighbour, named Roussel, a peasant in comparatively low circumstances, to borrow one, mentioning, at the same time, for whom it was wanted, as well as the heavy loss M. Drouillard had sustained. No sooner had Roussel heard what had happened, than he exclaimed, "Do not give yourself further trouble; I know where the money is;" and he immediately delivered to him the identical bag containing the six thousand francs. It appears that having found this bag, on his return from his daily occupations, he had placed it, though not without some difficulty on account of its weight, upon his horse, and carried it home, without even ascertaining how much it contained, or communicating his good fortune to his family; that the next morning he had got up at an early hour, and spent about an hour in going to the market-place and elsewhere, in order to learn whether any person had made any inquiries about it; and that he was but just then returned home without having been able to ascertain who had lost it, when he was thus introduced to the delighted owner.

Agitation.—There must always be a partial, gentle, wholesome agitation of the minds of men, or there will be no intellectual strength, no regular advancement in knowledge and true holiness. This gentle and continual agitation is as necessary to the health and vigour of men's minds, as the ceaseless and universal agitation of the air and sea is to the health and welfare of the animal creation. And, in fact, agitation cannot be prevented. Those who try to prevent it will be disappointed: they may put it off for a while, but it will still come, and the longer it is delayed, the more violent and terrible it will be. Let people alone,—or rather, meet error with truth; expose what is false, by plain and solid argument, and contend for truth in the spirit of charity, and you will have no need to be afraid of agitation. But if, instead of doing thus, you intimidate men, and chain them down, and refuse them the liberty to speak and circulate their sentiments freely, you will bring about a wild and fearful agitation at length, which will spread ruin in all directions. Have confidence in God; have confidence in truth; leave your brethren free as Christ has left them; go kindly and calmly about your own duty, and God will do the rest. We are answerable only for the faithful discharge of our duty; for the free and affectionate publication of the truth, and for the exemplification of each Christian virtue. This, we hope, will ever be our endeavour; all else we would leave to God. We have no idea that any evil can flow from such a course. Agitation there may be, but agitation itself will prove a blessing in the end. Let the masses of men have their minds exercised in serious thought upon religious subjects, and let their powers be employed in doing good, and no one will have any need to dread the agitation which will follow, but the devil and those of his party.

INVESTIGATION (CONTINUED.)

The Inefficiency of Modern Christianity.

"PROVE all things," said an inspired Apostle; and his injunction is our plea for the apparent boldness with which we venture to treat upon the most momentous topics during this Investigation.

We feel also most anxious that our Christian Brethren should see and feel fully their position, with reference to the particular inquiries which must now engage our attention. We will endeavour to illustrate this, by a somewhat homely metaphor.

A piece of machinery is efficient for the accomplishment of its destined purpose only so long as it is entire in all its parts, and each part properly and exactly adjusted. When thus completed, there only needs the application of perhaps a very inconsiderable propelling power, and some slight attention to the prevention of improper friction, or corrosion, and the whole machine is put into regular and satisfactory motion. An instrument of vast capability is thus gained, and processes to which the united strength and skill of thousands of human hands would be unavailing, are executed with ease. But this movement, of whatever extent or magnitude, continues satisfactory only whilst each part of the machine remains entire, and in its true position. The motion of the whole frequently depends upon the uniform revolution of one or other of the minutest wheels. A very slight deviation or friction may throw the whole into confusion, and even cause a total stand. Now, in such cases, the attention of the engineers and artisans is immediately turned to the defective part. All are aware that, till this be remedied, any attempts to force on the machinery would be worse than useless. A host of evils would ensue. If the movement of the machine should not be entirely prevented, its work would be done imperfectly. The raw or unwrought material would very probably be injured, and perhaps rendered useless. The machinery itself would most likely be corroded or cut to pieces; and the time and strength of the workmen would be thrown away. Or possibly an explosion might consummate the mischief by blowing men, and machinery, and mill, to atoms.

Now, we may designate the agency of the Christian Church, a species of moral machinery. It is the product of infinite wisdom and skill, and it is, as we have shown in a previous article, destined to accomplish a most stupendous work. It is efficient for that work, *because* thereto appointed by an unerring mind and hand. Its "builder and maker is God." But this agency—this moral machinery, is efficient only so long as it is entire, and universally employed. The whole system of Christian truth, both as to doctrine and discipline, experience and practice, must be continued in exercise, or the world's conversion cannot be effected. This truth, indeed, may be gathered from another, and a divinely sanctioned metaphor. "The whole body *(the Church,)* fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love." And to this end, we are told that, "He that hath ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things, hath given some, Apostles; and some, Prophets; and some, Evangelists; and some, Pastors and Teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ; till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." Eph. iv., 11, &c.

Now, the whole of this varied agency is not more necessary to the welfare of the church, than the exhibition and employment by the church, of its entire system of instrumentality is, in order to the conversion of the world. No; the work can never be achieved until the Christian system, in all its "exceeding broadness," be enforced and exemplified. The moral machinery of the church must be entire, and universally employed. No essential, that is, no *divinely ordered* part, must be neglected. If such neglect or defect be tolerated, the Christian labourers will witness most distressing and discouraging results. If any converts are gained, they will, at the most, be few; and these few will be more or less inconsistent and unstable. And where a few are converted, many will be injured; many will become *hardened* by the repetition to them of one or a few truths, to the neglect of other truths, which, perhaps, would cut them to the heart at once. The moral machine also, the agency itself, will be impaired. Indifference, weariness, and discouragement must, in time, seize on the labourers; and what is their reward? They have spent their strength in vain, or nearly so. They have aimed, perhaps, only at converting sinners, and have then left them to imbibe the maxims and opinions of a fallen church and a deluded world. They have left them, perhaps, to sink ere long, into indifference and worldliness,—to spread increasing confusion and disorder and ruin through the church of which they formed a part.

Now we are about to institute an inquiry into the present state of the Christian machinery; to inquire, *whether the Christian Church affords us evidence of its present fitness for its destined work?* Such an inquiry is always important, but now, when the great Head of the Church is exciting in the hearts of thousands a desire to become "workmen, needing not to be ashamed,"—when an ardent longing after the restoration of primitive zeal, holiness, union, and success, are spreading from soul to soul, and when, therefore, "the time to favour Zion, yea, the set time is come," *now* especially, an intense interest is thrown upon every topic of the kind. Christian Brethren, let us rightly see and feel the responsibility of our position. We have each to take our part in accelerating that moral machinery, which must convert the world; and in order to the right performance of our task; that we may not spend our lives, either partly or wholly, in vain, we must look to the state of the moral machine.

I. Let us, in the first place, *glance at the influence which the Christian church now exercises upon the world.* This will be seen most easily and vividly by contrasting its present success with that which is recorded of it during the first ages of its existence. We notice now the extent, not the causes, of this various success. At first, "about a hundred and twenty" disciples are found assembled and continuing in prayer and supplication. When the day of Pentecost is fully come, the Holy Ghost descends, and these one hundred and twenty are filled, and begin "to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gives them utterance." They did not speak in vain. Their hearers were pricked to the heart, and "the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls." These continued praising God, and having favour with all the people, and "the Lord added to the church daily, such as should be saved." Soon afterwards, we are told that, after a sermon preached by St. Peter, "many of them that heard the word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand." And soon after that, again, "believers were the more added unto the Lord, multitudes both of men and women." And in those days when the number of the disciples was multiplied, and it became necessary to select other men to transact the increasing affairs of the church, we find the result of this arrangement thus recorded, "And the Word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly, and a great company of the priests were obedient unto the faith."

The religion was now spreading from country to country. Already there were "churches throughout all Judea, and Gallilee, and Samaria," and "walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, they were multiplied" still further. They that were scattered abroad by the persecution which arose about Stephen, also "went everywhere preaching the word." Indeed, an open door, and effectual, seemed to open in every direction. Individuals, families, and towns, on every hand yielded to the force of truth.

And this astonishing progression continued long after the last of the Apostles had left the world. POLYCARP, a disciple of St. John, who suffered martyrdom about A.D. 110, when brought to the stake, was met by the populace with the following testimony, "This is the Doctor of Asia, the Father of the Christians, and the overthrower of our Gods, the man that hath taught so many not to sacrifice." About the same time, TACITUS, though a Roman, and but a narrator of civil transactions, affords us similar evidence. He says of Christianity, "This superstition, thus (by the crucifixion of its Founder,) checked for awhile, broke out again, and spread not only throughout Judea, but through Rome also, whither every thing that is bad in the earth finds its way, and is practised. At first a few that confessed their sect were seized, and afterwards, by their information, a vast multitude were apprehended." These circumstances are related by Tacitus as having taken place, not at the time when he wrote his history, but forty years previously, that is about A.D. 60., or only thirty years after the death of Christ. PLINY, also, in his celebrated letter to the Emperor, written also about A.D. 100 or 110, says of the Christians, "There are many of every age, and of both sexes, for the contagion has seized not only the cities, but even the villages, and the open country." And about a century afterwards, about A.D. 200, TERTULLIAN declares "The common cry is, The city is infested, town and country over-run with Christians." And he says that, by the enemies of the religion, "this universal revolt of all ages, sexes, and qualities,—this prodigious progress of Christianity, thus draining the world, and attracting from every quarter, was looked upon as a public loss." And Tertullian's own declaration shows still more strongly, if possible, the efficiency of the agency then exerted in the propagation of Christianity. We must, therefore, give the whole paragraph, though rather too long for a quotation. "We are but of yesterday, and by to-day are grown up, and have overspread your empire; your cities, your islands, your forts, towns, assemblies, and your very camps, wards, companies, palaces, senate, *forum*, all swarm with Christians. Your temples, indeed, we leave to yourselves, and they are the only places you can name without Christians. What war can we now be unprepared for? And supposing us unequal in strength, yet considering our usage, what should we not attempt readily, —we, whom you see so ready to meet death in all its forms of cruelty,—was it not agreeable to our religion to be killed rather than to kill? We could also make a terrible war upon you without arms, or fighting a stroke, by being so passively revengeful, as only to leave you; for, if such a numerous host of Christians should but retire from the empire into some remote region of the world, the loss of so many men, of all ranks and degrees, would leave an hideous gap, and a shameful scar upon the government; and the very evacuation would be abundant revenge. You would stand aghast at your desolation, and be struck dumb at the general silence and horror of nature, as if the whole was departed. You would be at a loss for men to govern, and in the pitiful remains you would find more enemies than citizens; but now you exceed in friends, because you exceed in Christians." How strikingly do the various statements which have now been presented, prove the incipient accomplishment of the prophecies examined in our second article. The Christian *Zion* already attracted the astonished nations; and already they began to "flow unto it." The brightness of Zion's rising already illumined the moral horizon. "Many people" were willing, in the day of the Messiah's power, and mightily did the word of truth increase and prevail.

But we must turn to a very opposite scene. The world, after the lapse of eighteen centuries of the Christian era, is still lying in the wicked one. The mighty onward progress of genuine godliness has long since ceased. And though, in some few remote and widely scattered places, a cultivated plot, here and there, again begins to vary the cheerless aspect of the vast moral desert; that portion of the world which has for many ages been designated *Christendom*, exhibits scarcely any recent general improvement. There is, indeed, some progress being made, but a retrograde movement is equally, if not much more extensive. What the truth has of late years gained in one place, it has lost elsewhere. Even the best of European nations is still deluged with iniquity. A flood of infinitely varied immorality still sweeps across the land of Bibles, sanctuaries, and religious institutions,—"Christian England." And though many of her sons speak much and hope much, as to the conversion of heathen lands, who of them all looks for *her* speedy conversion? No! the moral state of our own population discourages the most sanguine expectants of holier and happier years. In some of the numerous fragments into which the church is divided, the number even of *professors* is decreasing. And, even "charity, that thinketh no evil," is compelled to confess that where numbers increase, there is by no means a corresponding increase of piety and usefulness. Revivals, cheering revivals, indeed do take place in particular churches, occasionally; but a few weeks, or months, or years at most, generally paralyse, arrest, and destroy the effect of them. It is difficult to decide whether the operations of the last ten, twenty, or thirty years, have produced any visible amelioration of the moral condition of the *masses* of our countrymen. Nay, thousands are further from the truth than ever. Open and determined opposition is taking the place of mere indifference and inattention. Positive error is seizing unoccupied ground, and indecision is being banished by decided delusion.

And now we ask, what inference must be drawn from the contrast presented to our view? We think manifestly this,—that the history of the first successes of Christianity shows that the religion was then omnipotent; every obstacle then fell before it, and had not its progress been arrested by the "mystery of iniquity," the kingdoms of this world had, long ere this, become the kingdoms of our God, and of his Christ. But that the present influence of the church is almost infinitely less powerful. That the period of the world's conversion, if not *hastened* by more vigorous means, is inconceivably remote. That the church, as now existing, can in no point of view be regarded as efficient for its appointed task.

2. But we must *glance at the internal state* as well as the external influence of the church. And whilst we boldly, and yet we trust, in love, describe existing evils, let us not be misunderstood. We write in sorrow, not in anger. We write not to cause pain, but to exhibit faults and imperfections, in order that we may not think of ourselves more highly than we ought to think; and that a right estimate, by the church, of its still fallen condition, may now at length, after so long a time, if it be possible, awaken within it a becoming concern for its speedy reformation.

We will commence with *individuals.* No member of any Christian church should rest until he be "filled with the Holy Ghost." But the members of some churches have scarcely heard whether there be any Holy Ghost to be received by Christians universally. And tens of thousands of those who are taught their exalted privilege, are unconcerned to avail themselves of it. Many professors of twenty, thirty, or forty years standing, are still in a state of doubt as to what manner of spirit they are of. The Holy Ghost is given to create within the believer a clean heart, and to renew a right spirit within him; but many who profess the saving faith of Christ, are unable to discern any material change, either in their inclinations, dispositions, or affections. The Holy Ghost is given to bear witness with the spirit of each believer, that he, even he, is a child of God; but tens of thousands, even of those who enjoy the church communion of evangelical denominations, are living in a state of gloomy anxiety and doubt: they scarcely know whether they are not still under that spirit of bondage, which is the opposite of the spirit of adoption. The Holy Ghost is given to confer on each believer dominion over sin, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in them that walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit; but it is now a common confession even among those who profess to be under its influence, that they are carnal and sold under sin. The Scripture assures the believer, "sin shall not have dominion over you," and enjoins that he should cast aside even the sin that doth most easily beset him; but many thousands of modern believers plead inability; and excuse and palliate their various besetments. "It is my failing," "I am naturally so," "constitutionally so," "we must not expect to change one's nature," &c., &c., are sentiments openly expressed by those who profess to be born again, created anew, and changed from nature to grace!

And as is the fountain, so is the stream. As is the tree, so are the branches. The believer is called to be merciful, and meek, and gentle; but it is common to find modern believers harsh, impetuous, and revengeful. "I'll repay him," exclaims one. "I'm too much a man, I've too much spirit to endure this from him," cries another. "Oh no," says a third, "I bear him no malice, I forgive him from my heart, *but I can never forget him!*" True believers are easy to be entreated, but many modern believers may scarcely be spoken to. Believers are called to be patient, and Christian patience endureth all things; but many professed believers may now be heard exclaiming, even on the most trivial occasions, "I have not *common* patience with such conduct." And their gesture, tone of voice, and behaviour generally, confirm the sad confession: they are manifestly strangers, not only to *Christian*, but to "common" worldly forbearance. Sin has "revived," indeed, and is rife and rampant within them; they are still under the law, not under grace. Believers are called to be content in whatever state they may be allowed by Providence to come into; but many modern professors are among the loudest of complainers. "Nobody is so unfortunate, so hardly dealt with; nobody has so much to contend with" as they have. Believers are called to endure hardness as good soldiers, but effeminacy, delicacy, and *nervousness* prevail among the churches. Believers are called to rejoice evermore, to be cheerful and happy all day long, and all night too; but melancholy, fear that hath torment, and consequent peevishness, seem to inhabit many a modern believer's soul. Believers may, each and every one of them, exclaim, "Oh death, where is thy sting?" but great in this age is the number of those who, through fear of death, are all their lifetime subject to bondage.

Believers are told to "seek not every man his own, but every man another's wealth," but many modern professors deem it a more excellent way for "every man to do the best he can for himself," which is understood to signify that "all should seek *(attend to)* their own, not the things that are Christ's," or their neighbour's. The Scriptures teach that the possession of wealth endangers the soul of its possessor, but it is generally held to be exceedingly proper to aim at attaining as much wealth as possible; all which is supposed to be quite consistent with such injunctions as, "give all diligence to make your calling and election sure," "casting aside every weight," and "refraining from all appearance of evil." The Scriptures say, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, for where your treasure is, there *will* your heart be also;" but modern disciples of Christ say they may do the thing that is here positively forbidden, if only the evil *does not* follow, which Christ himself declares *will* follow. They are like unto children, who, when told "do not thurst your hand into the fire, for if you do it will be burnt," should exclaim, "We are not positively forbidden to thrust our hands into the fire, but merely, *not to burn them*, when in the fire." Believers are commanded, "in any wise to rebuke their neighbour, and not to suffer sin upon him;" but many modern professors are, altogether, "too civil," "too refined," "too liberal," "placed in too high a sphere of society," or, at least, they have "too many engagements," to attend in any way to this divine command. Christians are also commanded not to "go beyond," not to over-reach, or defraud, a neighbour; but, we are now told, even by some professors, "the times are so bad, that really a man cannot live," unless he takes every advantage that will leave him untouched by the laws of the land! And this frightful portraiture, alas, might even yet be rendered deeper and darker, but we forbear.

We must pass on, and now contemplate *the church as a society*, or as a whole. But this is scarcely possible; for there is no longer "one fold," that is, one visible church. There is a community indeed which claims this character, but its own historians, in effect, deny the claim; and record with one voice "the division of East and West," when the tyranny of Roman pontiffs split the church into two nearly equal parts, and the breach has never been repaired. And even the *reformed* portions of the church are not united to each other. Nay, as yet, they even doubt the possibility of such unity. Some of them indeed are so exceedingly far gone in error, as to prefer division to union, weakness to strength, darkness to light. And their apologists plead the utility of emulation in favour of the evil; strangely and fatally forgetting that emulation in a race is liveliest when the steeds are "neck to neck." But the various sects are too generally divided by discordant feeling, as well as difference in discipline or doctrine. There are, indeed, we rejoice to witness, symptoms of some improvement in this respect in some quarters, but in others, alas! party and sectarian feeling are on the increase. But were all united in affection, surely this would by no means justify the continued division of that which must be *one*, and be *seen* as one by all the nations of the earth. The invisible union of believers with Christ, must be manifested to the world by a visible union with each other, in order that the world may know them, and know their master. Existing divisions, then, are a fearful and fatal hindrance to the truth. But there are divisions, not only *of* churches, but *in* them. Believers are called to be of one heart and soul with each other; but now we hear of strife, and contention, and envying, and jealousy, much more frequently than we do of love so powerfully uniting.

And from such materials, how can a holy, devoted, efficient race of *officers* be selected? The officers of Zion are not all "peace," nor are all her "exactors, righteousness." We wish to speak with great deference, but we must speak the truth. The stated labourers on the walls of our Zion are not all "workmen needing not to be ashamed:" they do not all take care to avoid the "wood, hay, and stubble," and to build only with "gold and silver and precious stones." They are not all fearless of them that can only kill the body, and full of fear, filial, becoming fear, of him that, after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell. They are not all instant in season and out of season. They are not all patterns of sobriety, self-denial, and zeal; nor do they all show that they are not given to filthy lucre. It is to be feared, also, that they do not, all, fully and explicitly declare the whole counsel of God, and that consequently they are not all, "pure from the blood of all men." Those officers also, who continue *laymen*, some of whom nevertheless have the care of souls, do not always give due attention to their charge. They are not always attentive to the more important parts of their duty. The members of the church are not always duly instructed, encouraged, or reproved. They are not always kept in the paths of peace, as far as pastoral care could keep them. They have not always a good example set them. And the poor and rich are not always visited; nor can we say "there is none among us that lack." Finally, there are some officers in the churches, we will not guess how many, but there are such, we fear, in every section of it, and those both lay and clerical, of whom not even charity herself could say, "they are worthy of their office," —"a *better* than Jonah is here,"

Discipline consequently languishes. Neither ecclesiastical nor scriptural regulations are always and impartially enforced. It is not always manifest that "respect to persons" is avoided. Immorality is not always, and equally, punished, or noticed. All the drunkards, liars, and overreachers are not expelled. And the command to expel the *covetous* is utterly set aside. Though all confess that "covetousness is the sin of the Christian church;" the expulsion of a covetous member is an unheard-of occurrence. Nay, the character of the sin is so little known, that no brother dare, in the assembly of his brethren, say to another "you are covetous; and you should be expelled." And it is not certain, that all the erring members are even warned of their deserts and danger. Nor are all those whose feet tread in the most slippery places always made acquainted with the requisites of holy discipline. The rich are *not constantly* reminded that it is "easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle" than for them to submit, along with their poorer brethren, to rule and order. And the most holy, and therefore most worthy, are not always selected to offices of importance and responsibility. Nor are the most wealthy always removed from these offices when nothing but their wealth remains to recommend them. Nor, lastly, is the door of admission for converts into the church always made of uniform and righteous dimensions. It is not certain that all are rejected that deserve rejection, and all admitted that deserve admission.

Such, then, is the result of our glance at the external influence, and internal condition, of the church. We need not inquire further. We should but darken counsel by multiplying words. Such a church cannot convert the world. The Christian *machinery* is disordered and in confusion. The workmen that would "need not to be ashamed" must direct their attention to this disorder and confusion. They must call in the aid of the great, and good, and infinitely wise *designer* of the instrumentality. They must consult His *model*, as given in His *instruction book*. The church is not fit either to convince, receive, or instruct souls. Nay, what one zealous and devoted member effects, the ill example and inconsistency of ten or twenty others almost constantly destroys. And an ameliorative movement is, ere long, almost constantly succeeded by an indifference and worldliness as dark and discouraging as ever.

Brethren, what is the cause of all this? Why is the Church thus distant from the piety and influence of earlier ages? Why, after nearly four centuries have been spent in professed reformation, is not the church reformed? Why have modern revivals of religion, generally, been limited as to their influence, and transient as to their duration? *In our next article we shall endeavour to ascertain the causes of their failure;* and if we can but ascertain this, rest assured, Dear Brethren, we may "lift up our heads." The knowledge of an evil is half its cure. We shall thus avoid the rocks on which so many before us have been wrecked, and not only hope for, but actually witness, better and brighter days.

THE RIGHT OF PRIVATE JUDGMENT.

WHAT IS THE RIGHT OF PRIVATE JUDGMENT?

By the right of private judgment is meant the right of private individuals to judge for themselves what is true, and worthy to be believed, or what is good, and proper to be done. *Private* stands opposed to *public*, and *private judgment* to *public judgment*. It may be the judgment of the *public* that it is a sin to buy and sell on what is called Good Friday, or Christmas-day; but it may be the judgment of a *private individual* that it is *not* a sin to buy and sell on either of those days. Here a private individual forms a judgment, or holds an opinion on this subject, at variance with the judgment or opinion of the public. The *public* used formerly to mean the *authorities* in church or in state; and a private judgment meant a judgment or an opinion held by an individual, or by a number of individuals, different from the judgment or decisions of those authorities. For instance, the authorities of the church formerly decided that there were seven sacraments; a number of individuals believed that there were only two: the authorities of the church decided that the Pope was infallible; a number of private individuals were of opinion that he was no such thing: the authorities in the state decided that it was a Christian's duty to take oaths, and to fight when called to do so by the magistrate; but many private individuals judged it wrong to take oaths, or to fight. In all these cases we have *private* judgments against *public* judgments.

The *right* of private judgment means the right of private individuals,—of every individual, to form and to hold his own opinions, whether they agree with the opinions of the public authorities or not. Some say that men ought to think as the generality of people think, or as the authorities in church and state think: and that men have no *right* to think for themselves, and entertain opinions at variance with the opinions of the majority, or with the decisions of the civil or ecclesiastical rulers. Others contend that men *have* a right to think for themselves, and to embrace and hold such views of things as commend themselves to their own minds as reasonable and true. The latter principle, the principle that every man has a right to think for himself, and to embrace and hold such sentiments as are most powerfully commended to his mind as right and true, is what is meant by the right of private judgment. The rulers in the Roman Catholic Church teach that Christians are bound to believe what the Pope or councils declare to be true, and to reject whatever the Pope or councils declare to be false. The rulers in the Church of England teach that we ought to believe what is laid down in the thirty-nine articles, and in the Book of Common Prayer. Many dissenters teach that all who would be members or ministers of their churches, ought to believe the doctrines taught by their founders, or the views embodied in certain creeds or writings, drawn up by their leading men. Some sects decree that all who would be members or ministers among them, shall believe the doctrines taught in the writings of Wesley; other sects decree that all who would be members or ministers among them, must believe the doctrines taught in the Assembly's catechism. Some require a belief of Calvin's views, some a belief of Luther's, some a belief of Whitfield's, and others a belief of Priestley's. Those who plead for the right of private judgment contend, that men are not bound to receive the sentiments of any man or of any number of men, except so far as they may be convinced that they are true: that every man has a right, and, in fact, that it is every man's duty, to consult the oracles of God for himself, and to receive and to hold such sentiments as they appear to his mind to teach.

There is a difference between the Roman Catholics and most other sects on this subject. The Roman Catholics require *all* to receive and hold the decisions of the Pope and Councils: they not only require all their *members* to receive and hold those decisions, but they require all to *become* members of their community. This is the case also with what are called *State Churches* generally, especially in countries where dissent is very rare. Most other sects allow people to choose for themselves to what community they will belong, and only require such as become members and ministers *with them* to give up the right of private judgment. They profess to leave all free to think and judge for themselves, provided they do not belong to their community: but all who are members or ministers among them, are required to think according to the rule laid down by the rulers in the society.

Those, therefore, who contend for the right of private judgment, do not all contend for the same thing. Some only contend for the right to separate from the Roman Catholic Church, or from the established church of the country in which they live; and to form or plan some other church more agreeable to their own views. This class of persons think it perfectly proper to draw up creeds for others, and to require a belief of the creeds which they make, as a condition of church fellowship with them. They also think it right for men, when once they have united with them, to resolve to abide by what they have once embraced, and to submit their judgment in all things to the judgment of the majority of the rulers in the community.

Others contend for an *unlimited* right of private judgment. They contend, that to whatever sect a man may at present belong, and whatever situation he may hold in that sect, he ought still to think and judge for himself. They contend that it is wrong for persons to form sects, and to require a belief of any particular human creed or human interpretation of God's will, as a condition of membership, or as a test of ministerial qualification. They contend that it is wrong for people to regulate their belief by human authority at all. They contend that for men to promise to believe whatever may be decreed to be true by a majority of their brethren, is wrong. They contend that every man has not only a *right* to judge for himself what is right and true, but that it is every man's *duty* thus to judge, and that without respect to any human authority whatever, whether civil or ecclesiastical. They contend that Christians ought not to *acknowledge* any human authority in religious matters,—that they ought to regard nothing as true, merely because it happens to be declared true by men, —that they ought to prove all things, and hold fast that only which commends itself as true and good to their own minds.

It will be seen that the sentiments of these two classes of persons, on the right of private judgment, differ very widely. The first class, in fact, come nearer the Roman Catholics than they do to the latter class. The difference between the Roman Catholics and them appears to be this:—The Roman Catholics and state churches say, We require you to become members of our church, and to submit your judgment in all things to the judgment of our spiritual rulers: the middle class of Protestants say, We do not require you to become members of our church, we leave you free to unite with what body of Christians you please; only we have adopted certain sentiments as a creed for ourselves, and we have committed to certain persons the sole authority to alter, to interpret, and to apply that creed, and to their decisions we pledge ourselves to submit; and no one shall be allowed to unite or to remain with us, who will not submit to our creed and to our established authorities. The Roman Catholics, together with several established churches, say, If you will not submit to our church quietly, we shall use means to make you submit; the middle Protestants say, If you do not submit to our authorities we cannot regard you as a member with us,—we cannot admit you to our feasts of love, or to the supper of the Lord,—nor can we allow you to preach to our people. We do not say you will be shut out of heaven, nor will we do you any bodily injury: but as you claim the right to judge for yourself, and to *declare* your judgment, so do we claim the right to form our judgment about you, and to declare it too.

The other class of Protestants believe that though these views are an improvement on the Roman Catholic views, that they are yet defective, and come far short of those liberal views which the New Testament inspires. They contend that to establish a human creed in Christ's church, and make a belief of that creed a condition of Christian fellowship, is wrong;—and that to establish any human authority in the church, and require subjection to such authority as a condition of church membership, is wrong. They contend that if people believe in the same God, and the same Saviour, as revealed in the New Testament Scriptures, and prove the sincerity of their faith by a consistent life, they ought to be received into the church without scruple. They contend that *faith* is the *Gospel* condition of church membership, and not *opinion*. That though unity of *faith* is both practicable and necessary, yet uniformity of *opinion* is neither. That we have no right to exclude men from the church for differing from us in opinion, so long as they sincerely receive the testimony of God and of his Son. That different modes of interpreting and applying Christ's words are perfectly consistent with genuine Christian faith and charity, and that they ought therefore to be peacefully and cheerfully tolerated; and that they who require persons to agree with them in interpreting and applying Christ's doctrine, usurp Christ's place, make themselves lords over their brethren's souls, and go in opposition to the spirit and teaching of the whole religion of Jesus Christ.

We have here stated as plainly as we could, what is meant by the right of private judgment, and how far different classes of professing Christians think that right ought to be allowed. What are our views on this subject, we may state hereafter. At present we wish merely to lay before our readers the different views which are entertained by professing Christians on this subject: which are the *right* views, may be the subject of investigation afterwards.

A Friend, B. B., asks for information on the subject of the right of private judgment: he will probably find the subject treated at full length shortly.

OVER-LIVING AND OVER-TRADING.

The following memoir has very little of incident in it, and it may, on that account, be considered dull by some; but it is, in our judgment, both instructive and affecting, and especially called for by the extravagant and speculating spirit of the age.

SOME ACCOUNT OF EDWARD BROWN, OF SUNDERLAND;

With copies of sundry documents respecting him, from a pamphlet by Jonathan Richardson, Sunderland; published in 1821.

Edward Brown, it appears, had served an apprenticeship at Sunderland, and afterwards removing to Ireland, the following certificate was sent on his behalf, which not only evinces the tender concern of Newcastle Monthly Meeting for his welfare, but shows that, by early attention to the calls of Divine love, his circumspect walking through the slippery paths of youth, had rendered him a good example to those of his own class, and a comfort to his more experienced friends :—

Certificate from Newcastle Monthly Meeting, dated 1710.

To our friends and brethren in the nation of Ireland, or elsewhere, a salutation of dear love in the truth.

We send this on behalf of our friend Edward Brown, certifying that he served the time of his apprenticeship with a Friend who is a member of this meeting, during which time, (considering his years) he walked as became the truth, in which he was educated, and was an example of sobriety to the youth amongst us, and is in good unity with Friends, whose tender concern on his behalf is, that he may be preserved faithful to the manifestation which it hath pleased God to visit him withal amongst us ; and in that concern we recommend him to you, that the same Christian care may be continued over him, and that that plant which the Lord hath planted may be nourished and grow to the praise of his name, and that the exercises and trials he may probably meet with may not blast nor scorch that tender bud, is the hearty desire of your friends and brethren in the blessed truth."

Signed on behalf of the Monthly Meeting, &c.

Edw. Brown afterwards returned from Ireland to settle at Sunderland, and in 1715 we find he married Margery, daughter of Wm. Mitford; and, from the records of the Preparative and Monthly Meetings to which he belonged, it may be discovered that he became a very useful member of society, and was frequently appointed to services in the church.

Almost every production of his pen marks his superior talents and acquirements, and he was, doubtless, a truly valuable character, while his mind was preserved under the influence of the principle of truth, which keeps all things in their proper places, and bounds the desires of the humble followers of Christ : but when, after the decease of his beloved companion, (who was removed in 1724,) he became disobedient to the heavenly vision, and let out his mind after worldly greatness—the consequences that ensued are best described by himself in the following letter to the sister of his late wife. In this bewildered state of mind, we understand he sought the affections of a woman of fortune whom he had expected to marry, when (in 1727) he built himself a commodious mansion,* besides several other dwelling houses adjoining, which still remain as monuments of the man ; and no one who has fully entered into the circumstances of his case, can view, even these, without pensive feelings.

Cork, 18*th of* 4*th Mo.*, 1730.

Dear Sister, Barbara Smith,

A kind letter from thee, amidst my calamities and misfortunes, would have been refreshing as the reviving beams of the sun to the drooping plants after a cloudy and wet season; though I have missed that favour, and been left to bear my grievous afflictions alone, like a pelican in the wilderness, whilst my friends and kinsfolk stood aloof; yet having ever had a dear love for thee, which I still retain, thou hast been often in my mind, and that sweet and edifying conversation we have so often enjoyed together, and particularly that discourse which passed betwixt us near our last parting at thy house, which, alas! I little then thought should have been for so long a time, occasioned by such great distress falling on me, as one part of thy dream, or vision, then mentioned, that thou hadst concerning me is fulfilled in my bitter sufferings, so I hope the Lord, in his own time, will also accomplish the other part, by delivering me out of all my troubles. And, praised be his name, though I am unworthy, yet I find his Divine goodness near to comfort and sustain me through and over them all, or else I should have fainted, ere this day, under the piercing anguish and heavy burden thereof. I have been as with Jonah in the bottom of the raging deep, where the weeds, as it were, wrapt about my neck, but the merciful Lord forsook me not—the breath of life found me out, and, through its inspiration, preserved me alive. His everlasting arm reached me and brought me up again from the horrible abyss, and set my feet in the land of the living, on the rock of salvation, to celebrate and magnify his ever worthy and adorable name! He guided the tumults of my mind, and cried, "Peace, be still!" and calmed the stormy winds. I doubt not but thou heardst of the additional affliction I met with here at my arrival, by my father being taken off with an apoplectic fit a few days before; and, instead of meeting with a kind reception from an affectionate father, and a comfortable provision for my subsistence, as he had given me to expect, I found a house filled with mourning and tears for his death, which was so sudden, that it gave no time for altering his will as he designed; so one he had made about five years ago came in force; and, at that time, he supposing me to be in a thriving way, he left his substance, both real and personal, to his young son R——, a minor now, but little more than ten years of age. I shall not particularize the distress this further calamity brought me into, knowing thy good sense and sympathizing nature will readily suggest to thee the deplorableness of being in a strange country in such melancholy and necessitous circumstances, not having as much money left as to pay for my passage! Ah! how have I been tossed about,—what anguish has filled my breast, since thy dear sister, my lovely, sweet Margery, was snatched from me! Oh! she was the joy of my heart and delight of mine eye! Her precious, dear idea is continually before me. I shall ever have the truest and dearest affection for her memory, and shall regret, with deep sighs, to my last breath, my unspeakable loss in that lovely, pleasant, virtuous consort, who, if she had been spared, might have been instrumental to preserve me from these dismal disasters;—but, whilst I grieve under these aching sorrows, in this vale of tears, she is happy on the celestial shore, beyond the reach of all disquiet, which is a consolation to me; and the hope that the time will come that I shall rejoice with her in that endless felicity, is an exhilirating cordial to cheer my drooping sinking spirits.

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* It commanded an extensive sea view, and had large gardens belonging to it.—The other houses were intended for the captains of his ships, &c. It is understood that the whole cost Edward Brown about £5,000 ; the house was afterwards in the possession of M. Smith, but now, (1820,) it is the custom-house for the port of Sunderland.

I am much grieved that any should lose by me: I can honestly say, more than at my own great losses and sufferings. I was in hopes my father would have put me in such a way that, in a little time, I might have made up what was deficient to my creditors; but, being disappointed of that, makes my loss the heavier to bear: yet if ever I am able, or favoured by Providence to be of capacity, it is my firm resolution to make up what my effects fall short to them and theirs. Nothing in this world I desire more, therefore I hope if I never have the substance to do it, the will may be accepted for the deed by him who looks at the sincerity of the heart, as also by all tender persons who are sensible of my calamitous condition for my failings. In particular, I am heartily sorry that thou shouldst suffer by thy extraordinary kindness and affection towards me, which, when I was last with thee, was far from my thoughts, having given M. S. security, which he declared he was satisfied with, and vowed and protested in the most solemn manner that he would not execute the power I had committed to him, and thinking myself safe from all others, and that, in a little time, to clear them off, made me judge my circumstances very hopeful: and whatever calumnies or accusations may be vented against me, (of which the unfortunate, though ever so innocent, have generally a large share,) I can truly say I designed no wrong to any, and have this comfort, that my conscience does not accuse me of having ever wilfully injured any person, though I have suffered much injustice and oppression. I look upon my failing to be rather the effect of Divine displeasure for my unfaithfulness in what the Lord required of me for some years, than the ill state of my affairs; for, had not the Almighty (who has the hearts of all mankind in his hand) permitted M. S. to deal so treacherously and cruelly by me, I might have succeeded very well, my business being in such a posture as would, in all human probability, have brought in above £500 a-year, at a moderate computation; but since I would not give up to be one of Christ's fools, I am now justly one of the world's, and am made a poor spectacle both to angels and men. I wish that others, by taking warning by me, may happily escape the harms and evils I have endured, by not letting their minds out after the glory and riches of the world, when they should have their hearts in deep humility retired to the heavenly gift in themselves, and, through the ability thereof, be doing the Lord's business. Oh! it is a very dangerous state, and great infelicity, for men to be doing their own things, and neglecting the things of the eternal Jesus, who laid down his life and suffered his most precious blood to be spilt, that he might redeem poor mortals from these corruptible objects; therefore it is very just in him, and I believe merciful too, to sweep all these things away from me, that so I might trust in nothing but the living God. There were divers testimonies delivered in a prophetic manner in our meeting at Sunderland, which seized my spirit with a sense of their belonging to me. Oh! how signal and remarkable have been the Lord's merciful dealings and visitations towards me, a poor creature, not worthy of the least of his mercies and truth;—neither time nor paper could contain a relation thereof; but this I shall notify, that John Turner, from Ireland, signified, in Samuel Maude's parlour, (I being there with some few Friends after Meeting,) that the Lord would require of some there to bear a public testimony to his name and truth; and that, if obedience were not yielded thereto, severe judgments would be inflicted on them, and it would go near to cost them their natural life. John Appleton, Joseph Fotheringham, and Mary Hutchinson, did all, at sundry times, declare, in a very particular manner, that there was a person in that meeting whom the Lord called to come forth and promulgate his blessed truth, and that, if obedience were yielded, a blessing would follow upon all his concerns, otherwise losses upon losses, confusion and desolation should fall upon him, and all that he took in hand should be blasted: and out of the meeting they gave me to understand that their concern related to me, and that I was the man. A letter I received soon after from Mary Hutchinson, which I have now by me, is clear as to her part. J. F. imparted his mind to that purpose in my parlour, F. Flower being with us part of the time;—and the summer before that deplorable winter wherein distraction came upon me like a whirlwind, because I had not answered when the Lord called, Mungo Bewley was at our meeting, and was much concerned therein to declare that some great distress and calamity was impending, and near to fall on some there; and, after meeting, when a few Friends, (among whom was S. Maude and myself) were sitting together, after some time of silence, he intimated that the concern he had in the meeting was renewed upon his spirit, and that it belonged to one then in company. He said that a great weight oppressed him in sympathy with the sufferings and afflictions that approached some present, but that he was comforted in feeling the mercy of God covering his judgment seat, and that the Lord would preserve alive, through all, and bring them at last to rejoice in his salvation, and to triumph over all tribulations and temptations, through the arising of holy seed and power into dominion. This I was very feelingly touched with, and deeply was it imprinted on my mind, but still hoped it would not be my lot, but expected it might belong to some other, and perhaps to Samuel Maude, who was then under suffering on account of his brother, but now it is clear to me that I was the person, for it was spoken of some to come, and not of what was present: and, feeling the Lord's mercy near, I am made patiently to wait, and quietly to hope for that salvation promised, as I have borne the chastisement predicted—to the Lord God, merciful and just, be glory, honour, and praise, through all his dispensations, but to me, shame, abasedness, and self-abhorrence, who am but as vile dust and ashes before his glorious, everlasting, and resplendent majesty! How often has his Word been as a flame of fire in my bosom, and, through the awe and dread thereof, every joint has been made to tremble; and though his message was upon the tip of my tongue, yet it was stifled in the birth, through my too great modesty, and delicacy, doubting I should not deliver it sufficiently methodical, and elegant;—but, alas! this was my weakness and sin—for, had I dwelt low and empty enough, he would have been as an overflowing fountain; and had I kept close to an inward, waiting, depending frame of mind upon the Lord, he that brought to the birth would have animated with wisdom, strength, and courage to bring forth. But an aspiring mind, the cares of the world, prosing in dead letters and cobweb learning, instead of reading and exercising myself in the book of life, choked the good seed, so that it brought not fruit to perfection: but I hope the good husbandman is ploughing up the fallow-ground, and removing the briars, and thorns, and weeds out of the way, that so the fallow-ground of my heart being meliorated, his blessed seed may spring up and bring forth fruit to his praise. I beseech him to forgive my transgressions, and grant me patience and resignation under his refining hand, so that I may be thoroughly purged, and come forth more pure than gold! I pray God to sanctify this bitter cup he has given me to drink of, and teach me obedience by the things which I suffer; and if my poor immortal soul be but saved in the day of the Lord, no matter what is lost in this momentary life. Oh! eternity! eternity! that it may henceforth be all my care and concern to be provided for thee. Oh! how tremendous are the thoughts of thy never-ending existence to those who are launching out of time, I know not but into miseries, that will run parallel with thy boundless duration, and be endless as thyself! O, gracious God! whatever I suffer here, spare me hereafter. Oh! grant me reconciliation, through the death of thy beloved son, and save me by his life, and take me to thy infinite mercy.

Dear sister, I salute thee in that endeared and indelible love which no time can extinguish, nor distance of sea or land divide, and remain,

Thy very affectionate brother,
EDWARD BROWN.

P.S.—I may never have the like opportunity to unbosom myself, therefore excuse prolixity.

Edward Brown having arrived in Ireland, a certificate was sent thither by Newcastle Monthly Meeting, accompanied by his own paper of condemnation, copies of which are annexed. It may be observed, that Friends, after deliberating on his case, had not felt it incumbent on them to issue a testimony of disownment against him, for the judicious reasons which they state.

The Certificate, to the Monthly Meeting of Friends, at Cork, in Ireland;

Sheweth—That, whereas Edward Brown was an inhabitant amongst us for many years, and lived in good reputation with his neigbours, and in amity with Friends, until of lat times he launched forth in dealings, adventures at sea, and building houses beyond his abilities, (against which he was several times cautioned,) which, together with some considerable losses in trade, reduced him to straits, and failure of payments, whereby, in the end, he was declared a bankrupt, at which time he was at London, and there stayed to attend the commissioners, after which, as soon as was thought convenient, we writ to him, setting forth the evil of his outrunning, and the reproach thereby brought upon the profession of truth, which called for an open condemnation, either from himself or us; so, after some time, we received one from himself, (a copy whereof we have herewith sent you,) which, together with what you may receive by personally conversing with him, which we have not had the opportunity of doing since he failed, we hope may be to your satisfaction, as what he writ (we charitably hoping it comes from a sensible, penitent, and sincere heart,) has been in a good measure to us; for if that merciful hand hath been pleased to blot out his offences, this church and people is thereby led and induced to follow that great example,—and therefore we, in great tenderness and affection, recommend him to your tender care and concern for and over him, that he may be encouraged under all his afflictions, and admonished to be faithful to that great and renewed visitation which hath prevailed with him to acknowledge his offences, that so his last days may be his best days, is our very earnest desire and prayer for him; so with a salutation of dear love, we remain your friends and brethren.

From the Monthly Meeting held at Sunderland, the 9th of 12th Mo., 1729, and signed in and on behalf of the same, by

R. Holme
John Middleton
Edward Walton
Lancelot Wardell
Robert Westgarth
Samuel Maude

EDWARD BROWN'S PAPER OF CONDEMNATION.

London, 5th of 6th Mo., 1729,

To Friends of Newcastle Monthly Meeting.

Whereas, by not closely adhering and keeping my mind subjected to the humble and self-denying life of Jesus, I have been too much elated, and aspired above my sphere, and thereby, through the just judgment of the All-wise Disposer, wofully experienced the wise man's proverb verified, that, "Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall:" Dear Friends, pray for me, that this evil seed may be burnt up, both root and branch, that so I may not henceforth "be high-minded, but fear," and being thoroughly resigned to the refining fire, may know judgment brought forth unto victory, thereby. In true self-abasement and contrition of soul I condemn all these my actions and projects, that proceeded from living above the meek and lowly principle of grace and truth, which brings into lowliness of heart and contentedness of spirit, with that station which unerring Providence places those in who are influenced thereby,—strive not to soar above his dispensations, but to follow as he by his wisdom and power leads and opens the way, and set him always before them, that they may not err from his righteous paths, least they dishonour his holy name, pierce themselves through with many sorrows, and plunge their poor souls into death and misery, by forsaking the fountain of eternal life and exhaustless felicity.

From a wounded and disconsolate heart, filled with remorse and anguish under the deep sense of my failings, and disobedience to the heavenly vision. I heartily grieve and lament that the profession of the divine and glorious light of Christ, (in which all the nations of them that are saved must walk,) should, by my folly and misconduct, suffer any eclipse or reproachful sully. I entreat, and earnestly beseech the God of mercy, and his tender-hearted and compassionate people, (who have tasted that the Lord is gracious,) to forgive and blot out my offences, to proclaim liberty to the captive, and restore me into favour; that so I may rejoice in tribulation, and in unity with God and his church I may live and die, and be happy everlastingly.

EDWARD BROWN.

After his return to his native land we find he did not continue long in this state of probation. In a record book, belonging to Cork Monthly Meeting, is the following memorandum:—

Edward Brown, son of James Brown, of Cork, died in Cork, at the house of Joseph Hoare, 8th Month, 27, 1730.

MINISTERS AND THE YOUNG.

No. 1.

When Peter had declared his love to Christ, Christ instantly replied to Peter, "Feed my Lambs." In these words the Redeemer appears to require that all who profess to love him, should pay special regard to the interests of the rising generation, and that his *Ministers* should take the lead, and set the example in this good work. Our desire is to enforce this duty upon Christ's followers, and especially upon Christ's ministers.

We cannot but acknowledge, if we think upon the subject properly, that the young stand in great need of our attentions. They have not only the seeds of evil in themselves, but they are surrounded with innumerable temptations and snares. The whole of their path is strewed with dangers to their immortal souls. They are exposed to the crafty temptations of the devil, and to the powerful and multiplied influences of a corrupt world. The prevalence of bad principles and bad customs; the influence of erroneous systems and corrupt institutions; the perpetual sound of irreligious conversation, and the perpetual sight of evil example, all tend to increase the jeopardy of youthful minds. Their ears, their eyes, and their feelings are all inlets to temptation; and almost everything they meet with is in danger of proving to them a snare. Whether they are at home, or abroad; at school, or with their friends, they are still in the midst of perils. The press pours forth its volumes of bad books; and infidel associations send forth their hired and practised advocates, to plead the cause of error and licentiousness. Perhaps never did unbelief stand forth more daringly, or assail the immortal spirits of our youth with such variety and force of temptation. I see no probability for their safety, unless the church and the ministry shall make more efforts on their behalf. If ever the Redeemer called on us, with more than usual earnestness, "Feed my Lambs," it is now. It is our wish to urge this call, both on the church at large, and on the ministers of Christ in particular. And first, on ministers. Let us consider, in the first place, what it is that we have it in our power to do for the young—and let us then consider, in the second place, the great obligations we are laid under, to do all we can.

1. More might be done for the benefit of those young persons who regularly attend the preaching of the Gospel in our places of worship, than is done. Many of the young sit under the word for years, without appearing to be powerfully and savingly affected thereby. I have often thought that our ministrations are not sufficiently adapted to our young hearers, and that to this deficiency the absence of a work of grace upon their hearts may in many cases be attributed. We ought to *preach* more frequently to the young, and dwell more upon such subjects, and enlarge upon such views of sacred truth, as are peculiarly suited to their case, and as have a special adaptation to awaken and affect their hearts. We might speak more frequently of the guilt and madness of procrastination; the importance of early piety, and of the advantages which the young possess for *seeking* religion, and for making proficiency therein. We might speak of the influence of early piety on the circumstances of men, and show them how it contributes to success in business, to health of body and vigour of mind, to domestic comfort and social enjoyment, to intellectual wealth and greatness, and how it furnishes us with opportunities of serving our connexions, of promoting the welfare of our neighbours, and of benefitting our country and the world. We might show them the ingratitude of procrastination towards God, the mischiefs it entails upon men, the disasters which it brings upon families, and the difficulties and troubles in which it so frequently involves men through all the periods of their life. We might expose the foolish delusions by which men try to quiet their minds in their procrastinations, and try to sweep away "their refuges of lies." On these and on kindred subjects we ought to dwell frequently, with a direct reference to the case of the young, and with a special and anxious desire to witness their conversion; and I doubt not but that the advantages resulting from such a course would be quickly seen.

2. We might, when speaking on religious subjects generally, adapt our remarks to their capacities, and apply them specially to their case. We might show them how each argument in favour of religion generally, bears with peculiar force on them. There is no subject but what is capable of such special application to the young, and which may not be advantageously employed as an inducement to an early repentance and a holy life. Are we speaking of the miseries of a sinful life? How natural to call upon the young to look before them, and behold through what sorrows they must pass, and with what torments they must become familar, if they make not haste to give themselves to God. Are we unfolding the advantages of godliness? How easy to ask the young to survey the varied and boundless pleasures and enjoyments which are at their service, to sweeten the whole of their existence, if they are but willing to make haste to return to God. Do we speak on the happiness of heaven? How natural to remind the young, that the happiness of saints in glory will be in proportion to the length of time they spend in God's service on earth, and to the zeal, and patience, and devotion with which they toil and suffer in his cause. Do you speak of the calls of God? How easy to inform the young, that these calls, if they disregard them, will daily become more faint,—that their hearts will gradually lose their tenderness of feeling, and grow hard,—and that every time they resist the Spirit of God, they run the risk of being given up to the hardness of their hearts, to work iniquity with greediness. And when we speak of the difficulties of religion, of the dangers of temptation, of the various duties and privileges of the Gospel, we might still find it easy to apply the principles of our discourses to the young, and to engage their attention especially to our remarks. This could scarce fail to have a happy effect on the minds of many, and to bring them to an early decision in favour of God and holiness.

3. We ought, if we would do justice either to the young or the aged, to shun all matters of mere speculation or needless controversy, and give our whole attention to such matters as have a direct tendency to affect and to renew the heart. We ought never to trifle;

"But preach as though we ne'er should
preach again,
"And as a dying man, to dying men."

4. We might do something more than we do towards the salvation of many young persons in our congregations, if we were to court their acquaintance more, and seek opportunities of speaking with them privately. We are prone to pass the young by. We speak to their parents and their employers, but we have seldom a word for them. They look at us, but we look not again; they listen to what we say, but we address none of our remarks to them. We do not understand or appreciate their importance as we should do. We underrate their understandings, and we miscalculate the interest they feel in the subject of religion. Perhaps a feeling of pride would persuade us that we should stoop too low to speak with them; or perhaps because they have lived fewer years than their parents and masters, we think them of less moment and consideration. Many rich opportunities of doing them good are thus lost. They expect to be noticed, and they frequently wish to be addressed; and if we would but speak to them kindly of their souls and of their Saviour, they would often receive from us lasting good. They would feel honoured by our notice, and begin to think how they might secure a repetition of such respect and kindness. They would feel themselves bound to us by such tokens of love, and be stimulated to act in such a way as might be likely to secure the like tokens for the time to come. They would be encouraged to sacrifice their old and dangerous friendships, and seek the company of the grave and pious. The young are easily won, if properly sought after, especially if sought after by a minister of the Gospel. They soon begin to love us, when they find themselves beloved; and when they love, they love devotedly. And when, by the kind attentions of their pastor, their affections are once gained, they will not soon be lost. Let us then set our hearts upon the young, and never rest till we have had repeated interviews with them,

and seen reason to believe that good and deep impressions have been made upon their minds.

5. In many cases we might be instrumental in doing lasting good to the young in our congregations, by lending them, with our own hands, tracts, or little books; or by giving them occasionally a tract or book, accompanying the gift with suitable advice, and affectionate requests that they would attentively read it through. Tracts and books thus given, I have known preserved for years with the greatest care, and read over again and again, until they have been rendered instrumental in producing, in the hands of God, a change of heart and life.

6. We might do more as ministers than we have yet done, to bring into disrepute, and ultimately to abolish, many customs which are continual snares to the young, and which annually lead astray, and swallow up in ruin, thousands of young immortal beings. Every thing that tends to deprave the minds of youth, and to increase the difficulty of their conversion and salvation, should have the vigorous and ceaseless opposition of every minister of the Gospel. Something should be done to do away with *Wakes*, and the observance of all abused and mischievous festivities. More should be done to abolish theatres, assemblies, races, sports of the field, the custom of taking Sunday pleasure trips, and all the various forms of gaming. We might do something towards reforming the foolish feasting and drinking customs of marriages and births, of baptisms and funerals, and a multitude of other ensnaring customs of social intercourse. More might be done towards uprooting and destroying the drinking system of our country, and banishing from common use all intoxicating drinks? We might, in this way, not only fix a barrier to the ravages of drunkenness, but bring about its utter extirpation. Great things have been done in the way of general reformation in times past; and why should not great things be done now, and in times to come? Many cruel sports have ceased to disgrace our country, and many vile and evil customs have been changed: mighty and glorious institutions have been formed, and made to operate with greater force from year to year, upon the minds and characters of our countrymen, and of the inhabitants of distant lands: and may we not hope by our united efforts, assisted and succeeded by the Almighty, to multiply these happy changes, and to increase and extend the influence of every useful institution, till the empire of the wicked one is quite thrown down? The work is great and difficult, but God is strong, and in the strength of God it may be done.

7. We might do much to prevent the ruin of many young persons, by explaining to parents and masters the duties which they owe to them, and urging them both publicly and privately, to a right and diligent discharge of them. It is distressing to think how many parents, who profess to be Christians, either neglect or understand not their duties to the souls of their children. They appear not to consider that their rising offspring have immortal souls, and that without religion they must be lost. Or, if they think of the souls of their children, and do something for their salvation, they go about the work as carelessly and slothfully as if they regarded it as a work of secondary importance. If they can secure for their children the blessing of religion, without subjecting themselves to any special care or trouble, and without incurring any worldly inconvenience, they will do it; but if ease and duty clash,—if the claims of the world and of religion came in competition, the world and self must triumph. Look at professing parents, and tell us; is it always a regard to God that determines their choice of a calling for their children? Is it a regard to their children's souls that decides to what school they shall be sent, to what families they shall pay their visits, and what youths shall be their acquaintances and friends? Are they thoughts of God and eternity, that rule professing parents in the ordering of their children's dress, their diet, their labours, their recreations, or the different branches of their education? Are not the thoughts of God, of the soul, and of eternity set aside, or kept under; while the thoughts of honourable acquaintance, decent appearances, profitable alliances, and lucrative

employments are the uppermost and ruling thoughts?

Hence hundreds of children of professing Christians, grow up and form their characters at random. There is, in their parent's dwelling, no regular system of instruction. The Gospel cannot be taught, because the love of the world prevents it from being understood. The example of parents is faulty; religion is exhibited imperfectly and inconsistently; and though it is treated as *some* thing, it is not treated as *every* thing to man.

In consequence of this improper treatment, thousands of young persons go to fill the ranks of Satan, which ought to have filled the ranks of Christ. How shall this be remedied? We have already addressed ourselves to professing parents on their duties,* but comparatively few of them will read what we have written. After all the books that may be written, there will still be many parents that must be taught their duty in some other way; they must be taught the will of God by the living voice of ministers of the Gospel. They will *hear*, when they will not *read;* and we should allow them to hear from us, from time to time, whatever concerns their duty. We should, in our addresses to them, or in our conversations with them, go through the whole business of religious education. We should explain, and illustrate, and enforce their duty in all its branches; and we should, with Christian gentleness and tenderness, point out and correct every error. We should learn what are the faults of our flock, and by what prejudices and misconceptions they are prevented from correcting their faults; and we should labour, both publicly and from house to house, with our flocks, to remove those prejudices, and rectify these misconceptions.

When we have done what we can by our personal instructions, and even while we are doing it, we may recommend them to read such treatises on the subject of religious education, as are likely to impress their minds with a sense of their responsibility, and to instruct them in their duty. In some cases we may lend, in some cases we may give, and in many cases it would not be necessary to do no more than simply recommend the books we wish them to peruse. We might encourage the members of our churches to assist each other by the loan of useful books, and in some cases we might request the more wealthy to purchase useful books for distribution among the poorer members. To have them properly instructed in every branch of their duty to their children, and especially to their children's souls; and to bring them fully to understand and feel the importance of making the careful and skilful discharge of these duties the great concern and business of their life, a minister should spare no pains, he should shrink from no expense. And by directing his attention to the parents, especially to those who have but lately begun to sustain that interesting and affecting relationship, he may do much both towards improving the present generation, and towards preventing its prevailing errors and deficiencies from descending to the generations that are to come.

REASONS FOR CEASING TO BE A MEMBER OF TWO BENEFIT SOCIETIES.

[The following article is from a young man, who considered the subject attentively, and long before he concluded to take the course he has taken; a young man, whose general character and standing in the church, entitle him to be regarded with respect.—Ed.]

1. Because by contributing to the funds of these societies, I was acting in contradiction to the Saviour's injunction "Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth." Matt. vi. 19. Luke xii. 19, &c.

2. Because contributing to the funds of these societies, took from me the greatest portion of my *means* of "doing good unto all men."

3. Because many of the customs and usages of these societies appeared to me to be both needless and opposed to the sobriety of deportment enjoined in the New Testament.

4. Because mixing in the company of ungodly men, which my connection with these societies rendered in-

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* See a publication, entitled "The Care of the Young," &c., by J. Barker.

evitable, was, according to my judgment, contrary to many express commands of God, both in the Old and New Testament, requiring those who profess to be his servants to be "separate, and to come out from among the ungodly," &c.

5. Because I had known several instances in which connection with these societies had been the cause of decreasing the spirituality, and lessening the usefulness of professors of religion: and because,

6. My own experience convinced me that my prosperity of soul was in jeopardy while in them.

GOOD RESOLUTIONS.

[The following resolutions, for the regulation of his conduct, were formed by William Law, the author of "a Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life;" and as some of them are of the utmost importance, and calculated to promote the benefit of all who practically adopt them, we insert them here.—Ed.]

To pass my time as little as possible among such as cannot benefit me, or I them.

To think nothing great or desirable because the world thinks it so; but to form all my judgments of things from the infallible Word of God, and direct my views accordingly.

To avoid all concerns with the world, or the ways of it, but where religion or charity obliges me to it.

To remember frequently, and impress it deeply on my mind, that no condition of this life is for enjoyment, but for trial; and that every power, ability, and advantage we have, are so many talents to be accounted for to the Great Judge of the world.

That the greatness of human nature consists in nothing else but in imitating the Divine nature; that all the greatness in this world which is not in good actions and holy dispositions, is nothing to the purpose.

To read and think often of the life of Christ, and propose it as a pattern to myself.

To remember often and seriously how much of my time has been already spent, from which I can expect nothing better than a charge of guilt, and how little there may be to come, on which my eternal happiness depends.

To call to mind the presence of God whenever I find myself under any temptations to sin, and to have immediate recourse to prayer.

To think humbly of myself, and with great charity of others, allowing much for the ignorance and sad disadvantages they labour under.

To forbear condemning or speaking evil of any one.

To receive all pains of body or mind as tokens of God's love, and be thankful for them: to remember that whom God loveth, he chasteneth.

To pray privately three times a day, besides morning and evening prayers.

Not to build my hope of salvation on my own works or self-righteousness, but on the merits of Christ, and the shedding of his precious blood.

A Good Man in London.—"I once went to a friend, says Mr Cecil, for the express purpose of calling him out into the world, I said to him, "It is your duty to accept the loan of ten thousand pounds, and to push yourself forward into an ampler sphere." But he was a rare character; and his case was rare. His employers had said, "We are ashamed you should remain so long a servant in our house, with the whole weight of affairs upon you. We wish you to enter as a principal with us, and will advance you ten thousand pounds. It is the custom of the city; it is your due; we are dissatisfied to see you in your present sphere." I assured him that it appeared to me to be his duty to accede to the proposal. But I did not prevail. He said, "Sir, I have often heard from you that it is no easy thing to get to heaven. I have often heard from you that it is no easy thing to master the world. I have every thing I wish. More would encumber, increase my difficulties, and endanger me."

Open Air Preaching.—We ought never to relinquish the practice of preaching in the open air; we ought rather to use it more frequently. When Christ ministered the word of life on earth, he preached almost constantly under the open sky. He stood and proclaimed the truth on ships, in fields, and on the sides of mountains; and not unfrequently he carried it into the lanes and streets of the city. He not only offered salvation to those who came to seek it in the synagogue and in the temple, but he went himself to seek and to save those that were lost. It was while he was employed in such ways as these that he met with most of those young men who afterwards became his chosen disciples, and who carried the Gospel into all the nations of the earth. The Redeemer was imitated in this part of his conduct by his Apostles. They did not confine their labours either to fixed times or places, but were "instant *in season* and *out of season*," and "went *every where* preaching the word." They preached Christ in markets, and fairs, and on mountains, as well as in the synagogue and temple; and numbers were thus made to hear the Gospel, and brought to seek salvation, who might otherwise have gone down to the grave in pagan darkness. We ought to follow their examples. There are scores of thousands at the present day, and in our own land, that need such efforts as much as the sinners that lived in the times of Christ and his Apostles; and by such efforts the Gospel might be carried to the ears, and lodged in the hearts, of numbers of them. If this duty was faithfully attended to, many that have been trained in ignorance and sin, would be brought forth from their guilt and wretchedness, and become the happy children of the Lord Almighty. And if a powerful impression were once made upon the neglected and profligate masses of our countrymen, the work might be carried forward gloriously. The conversion of one to-day, might lead to the conversion of ten to-morrow, and a new and mighty impulse would thus be given to the cause of God in the world. Let us up and be doing.

A Poor Man.—"A poor man, who had heard the preaching of the Gospel, and to whom it had been greatly blessed, was the subject of much profane jesting and ridicule among his fellow-workmen and neighbours. On being asked if these daily persecutions did not sometimes make him ready to give up his profession of attachment to divine truth, he replied, "No! I recollect that our good minister once said in his sermon, that if we were so foolish as to permit such people to laugh us out of our religion, till at last we dropped into hell, they could not laugh us out again."

It was good for me that I was afflicted.—*To a lady who had many bereavements, to convince her such dispensations are permitted to strengthen our graces and promote our spiritual refinement.*

"I have now before me two stones, which are in imitation of precious stones. They are both perfectly alike in colour; they are of the same water, clear, pure, and clean: yet there is a marked difference between them as to their lustre and brilliancy. One has a dazzling brightness, while the other is dull, so that the eye passes over it and derives no pleasure from the sight. What can be the reason of such a difference? It is this: the one is cut but in a *few* facets; the other has ten times as many. These facets are produced by a very violent operation: it is requisite to cut, to smooth, and to polish. Had these stones been endued with life so as to have been capable of *feeling* what they underwent, the one which has received eighty facets would have thought itself very unhappy, and would have envied the fate of the other, which, having received but eight, had undergone but a tenth part of its sufferings. Nevertheless, the operation being over, it is done for ever. The difference between the two stones always remains strongly marked. That which has suffered but little, is entirely eclipsed by the other, which alone is held in estimation and attracts great attention. May not this serve to illustrate the reason why many of the best Christians are allowed to suffer in the present world the severest and bitterest trials? Is it not evidently done in infinite love, that hereafter they may receive a "far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, and *shine as the sun* in the kingdom of their father for ever."

Duty of Masters to their Servants.—Use them kindly in all things. Do *more* for them than your engagements require, rather than *less;* and thus secure their esteem and love, and bind them to you by the powerful ties of gratitude. Love is the sceptre by which the rational creation is to be swayed. Love is the mightiest and the happiest power in the universe. Force may destroy, and skill may baffle, but it is love alone that can truly conquer, and take away the wish and power to rebel. Love in a father or a master will generally secure obedience ; and where it fails for a time, the remembrance of it will make disobedience grievous and intolerable to the offender. Love and gratitude in your servants will make their obedience cheerful and constant, and convert a painful duty into a pleasure. Awaken then their affections, and keep them awake, and your opportunities of doing them good will be unlimited.

All religion stands in being resigned in heart to God without reserve ; and any farther than our minds come to this, all professions, opinions, words, or prayers in relation to religion, are nothing but empty sound. All sin lies in following man's own will; all righteousness in resigning to God's will. If we follow our own will, we are lost : if we follow God's will, we obtain salvation ; and this is directly the one way to Heaven, the other the way to Hell.—*Thomas Areskine.*

Happy are they, who, amidst the darkness and perplexity of life's arduous journey, keep their eye steadily fixed on that land of rest to which it conducts them—who annoy not their fellow-travellers by unkindness or reproaches, but, by every tender and gentle assiduity, endeavour to lighten their burdens, and beguile the length of the way ; and, by every fresh discovery of the errors and frailty of human nature, become less observant of the failings of others, and more watchful over their own.

ANSWERS TO ENQUIRIES.

TEMPERANCE REFORMATION.

A friend wishes us to recommend all the members of Total Abstinence Societies to address petitions to Parliament to the following effect :—

"The petition of the undersigned RECLAIMED DRUNKARDS, showeth," &c.

But our friend seems not to understand that the members of Total Abstinence Societies are *not* generally *reclaimed drunkards.* Perhaps not one in ten of the members were ever drunkards.

The petition prays that Parliament would "cause to be prohibited the drinking of all intoxicating liquors on the premises of any tavern, hotel, public-house, dram-shop, or beer-shop, except by travellers, or persons coming to markets or fairs, and that heavy penalties be inflicted upon the parties violating such enactment."

To such an enactment we should have three or four objections: 1. We think that travellers and persons coming to markets and fairs have no more need for intoxicating drink than others. 2. It would be of no use preventing drinking in particular places: what is wanted is a change in the sentiments and tastes of the people. Shutting them out of one place, would only drive them into other places, unless we could get them to renounce the drink voluntarily. 3. Such an enactment would only cause all that are fond of drinking to turn *travellers,* or to *call* themselves such, or cause them all to go to fairs and markets oftener than they otherwise would. How easy it would be for the drinkers to say, "We are all travellers." 4. We cannot, as Christians, recommend the infliction of penalties : "We war not after the flesh :" "Our weapons are not carnal." We can use no means for the reformation of men but the truth; we can recommend the use of no other instrument to others. Besides we have no great hopes of any important reformation being attempted by the Houses of Parliament : the members are not themselves reformed. It is not wise to look to governments for reforms : if we want to see a general improvement in the character and condition of our countrymen, we must labour for it as *indi-*

viduals. Every man that learns a truth must practise it, and teach it to his neighbours. This will produce an effect: it will reform government itself, without even talking about it: it will reform all things, and nothing else will. I should be afraid of government taking up the matter: they almost always spoil things.

DEAR FRIEND,—

Will you have the kindness, through the medium of the *Investigator*, to express freely your opinion upon the *characters* that should teach the rising generation at a Sunday School?

Would you admit those that are of good moral character?

A SUBSCRIBER.

Ans. I very much question whether any answer could be given to the above questions, which would not be liable to be seriously misunderstood. The question itself is too loose; it is altogether indefinite. What sort of *teaching* is it that the question refers to? Is it teaching reading and writing that is meant? or is it teaching religion? What is meant by "a good moral character?" The only good morality is love to God, and love to man. What is meant by *admitting* people to teach? The friend who proposes the question should have stated the particular case to which his questions referred. If I were to build a Sunday School, and had the appointment of teachers, I should put the direction and government of the whole concern into the hands of pious people. I should prefer having every benevolent institution entirely under the control of Christians. I would have the committee, and all the managing parties Christians. I should not feel in my place, to be *yoked* with any one who was not a believer in Christ, and a servant of God. I would not, therefore, admit into the governing body of the school, any but such as I believed to be Christians.

Nor, secondly, would I appoint an irreligious person to give religious instruction to the children: it would be folly to do so. But I cannot see why all but such as are truly and decidedly religious should be shut out from all part in the business of instruction. I do not see why any decent person should be denied the liberty of teaching a child the A. B. C. I do not see why the unconverted scholars themselves should not thus teach each other.

Why should one scholar be forbid to tell another scholar how to make a stroke, or spell a word? If I had a Sabbath School entirely under my control, I should prefer religious characters for every thing, and I should entrust *the whole of the government* of the school to them; but I should refuse no creditable person, whether young or old, the liberty of teaching the children to read or write.

CONGREGATIONAL METHODISM.

SEVERAL churches which have recently been formed, and where a wide field of useful labour is presented, being in want of suitable pastors, a Board of Correspondence has been instituted for the purpose of receiving applications from ministers, and facilitating their settlement over such congregations as have vacancies.

Individuals referring to the board will be expected to furnish the most satisfactory testimonials as to moral character, piety, ministerial qualifications, and that they approve generally of the doctrines and discipline taught and established in the methodist denominations.

Churches founded on the congregational methodist principle, may also, if they deem it convenient, avail themselves of the board, to assist them in procuring a supply of ministers.

Communications for the board may, for the present, be addressed to the care of the Editor of the Christian Investigator, Courant Office, Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

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THE IMITATION OF THE DIVINE GOODNESS.

"*Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.*"—Luke vi. 36.

The Redeemer, in the words of the text, requires us, not only to be merciful, but to imitate, in the exercise of mercy, the mercy of the Divine Being. "Be ye therefore merciful as your Father which is in heaven is merciful." It is our desire to explain and enforce this precept; to show, in the first place, what it is that is required of us, when we are called upon to imitate the mercy of our Heavenly Father; and, in the second place, to state some of those considerations which are calculated to stimulate us thus to imitate the mercy of God.

In the first place we would show what kind of beneficence it is that is required of us, when we are called upon to imitate the mercy of our Heavenly Father. How does our Heavenly Father proceed in the exercise of mercy? We answer,

1. The mercy of our Heavenly Father extends to all his works. "The Lord is good to all," says the Psalmist, "and his tender mercies are over all his works." "The eyes of all wait upon him; and he gives them their meat in due season. He openeth his hand, and satisfieth the desire of every living thing." The tender regard of God extends to every order of beings. Whether they be rational or irrational, whether they be visible or invisible, whether they dwell on the earth, or inhabit the deep, or have their abode in the worlds above, they are still the objects of God's tender care. And he attends to the interests, and ministers to the enjoyment, of every individual in each order of beings. There is not a single creature either in earth or heaven but what is the object of his affectionate care. The least as well as the greatest; the lowest as well as the highest; all come under his notice, and receive supplies of blessings from his hands.

If, therefore, we would be merciful, as our Father which is in heaven is merciful, we must embrace within the circle of our goodwill the whole of God's creation, and we must labour to promote the welfare of every fellow-creature over which our influence extends. There are some orders of beings to which we have no power of doing good, except so far as we may do them good indirectly, by promoting the welfare of other beings that are placed in nearer relationship to us. Our principal concern is with those of God's creatures which are placed directly under our influence, and especially with our fellow-men. If we imitate the mercy of God, we shall be merciful to our beast, and kindly disposed to every thing that hath life; but our principal concern will be with men. It is kindness to our fellow-men that is so frequently inculcated in the New Testament. It is our fellow-men, therefore, that we are especially to love, and that we are especially to labour to benefit. But our love and our labours are not to be limited to a portion of our fellow-men; they are to extend to our whole race. We are to do good to *all* men as we have opportunity. Our plans of beneficence are to be as wide as the world; and our object and endeavour must be to make happy every child of man.

2. Our Heavenly Father regards the whole interests of his creatures, and consults their welfare in all respects. With respect to man, he does not attend to a part of his interests, and overlook the rest: he does not attend to his body, and neglect his soul; he does not attend to man's interests for time, and neglect his interests for eternity; he attends to *all* man's interests. He considers our capacities in all respects, and bestows on us his various blessings accordingly. He looks to our welfare in the future, as well as at the present, and provides for our happiness through the whole duration of our being. Our Heavenly Father has acted on this principle from the beginning. When he formed man at first, and gave to him a double nature, he gave to him a double portion accordingly. He endowed him with health and vigour, and clothed him with beauty and immortality. He provided for him a delightful habitation, and surrounded him with every thing that could minister to his enjoyment. The heavens and the earth, the sun, and moon, and stars, the winds and clouds, the hills and dales, the woods and open fields, the fountains and the streams, the herbs and flowers, the blossoms and the fruits, and every living thing, were all made to minister to man's felicity. But while God thus richly provided for the life and comfort of man as an earthly being, he did not forget his soul. He had given him a spirit, with capacities of boundless knowledge, of unlimited improvement in moral excellence, and of immeasurable and eternal pleasures; and he accordingly provided him with the means of knowledge, he placed him in the way of spiritual advancement, and favoured him with rich communications of joy. He did himself become man's teacher and companion, and in affectionate and gentle ways draw forth his powers, and lead him onward in the paths of light and blessedness. And God still acts on the same principle. He cares both for our bodies and our souls: he makes provision for the welfare of our whole being, and for our happiness through every future period of our existence. To minister to our earthly welfare, he gives us a fruitful earth, and friendly seasons. He clothes the hills with grass, and the fields with corn, and the trees with fruit. The sun and moon and stars; the winds and clouds; the lightning and the thunder; the sunshine and the showers; the darkness and the light; the heat and cold; the ever-changing seasons; and all the rich productions of the soil, are but so many means by which he supports our life and ministers to our earthly happiness.

But he does not stop here. He has a special regard to our spiritual welfare. Such was his love to our souls,—so great was his regard to our spiritual welfare, that "he gave his only begotton Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life." He has given us a revelation of his will; he has provided for the forgiveness of our sins, and for the renovation of our souls; he has given us a multitude of great and precious promises; he has opened to us innumerable sources of holy enjoyment, and he has prepared for us an amount of blessedness in heaven beyond all that our hearts can conceive.

It is in this way that the Redeemer would have *us* to be merciful. He would have us to attend, not to a part of man's interests only, but to the whole. He would have us to look on our fellow-men both as earthly and as spiritual beings, both as the inhabitants of time, and as the intended inhabitants of eternity; and he would have us to labour for their welfare in both these respects. We are in danger of limiting our regard to a *part* of man. There are multitudes who act towards their fellow-men, as if they considered them as animals merely, and as inhabitants only of the present world. They are concerned for their earthly welfare, but they appear not to have any concern for the welfare of their souls. They are distressed when they see men without homes, and without food and clothing, but they think not of the deeper wants of the soul. They are concerned for the afflicted and the dying, and would gladly afford them relief; but they think not of the diseases of the mind, they show no anxiety to minister to the health and happiness of the immortal soul. There are multitudes of parents, who are as anxious for the welfare of their children in the present world, as parents can well be, who yet appear not to have the slightest concern for the welfare of their children in the world to come. They will do any thing to promote the health of their children's bodies, the comeliness of their persons, and their prosperity in the things of the present life; but as for the health and comeliness of their children's souls, and their welfare for the world to come, they appear not to have given them a single thought. These things ought not so to be. If we would imitate the goodness of God, we must love the souls of our children and of our fellow-men, as well as their bodies. We must not forget their bodies, but we must be still more careful not to forget their souls. While we provide for our children the things which are needful to the body, we must especially bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. While we feed the hungry, and clothe the naked, and visit the sick, we ought especially to endeavour to feed with knowledge, and clothe with righteousness, and bless with purity and peace and joy, the souls of all mankind.

3. Again, the benevolence of our Heavenly Father aims at the greatest possible good of which his creatures are capable,—at bestowing on them the utmost amount of happiness that they are capable of enjoying. This is the case with respect to the human race. He is not content with giving us *something*, he seeks to communicate to us *every* thing: he would not have us merely to *taste* of his love, he would have us to be filled with all his fulness. His object is to raise us to the highest pitch of knowledge, and holiness, and joy of which we are capable. It would perhaps be more correct to say, that God has fixed no limits to our capacity. He has made us capable of boundless and eternal improvement. Our understandings may expand for ever, and be for ever receiving fresh revelations of truth. Our affections may increase for ever in fervour and in power, and be for ever receiving fresh communications of joy and extasy. Even in the present life he bestows on those who are willing to receive his blessings, a peace that passes all understanding, and a joy that is unspeakable and full of glory: and in the life to come he gives them still greater things, even a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

And even the *body* of man is not an exception to this rule. It is true that the body is allowed to labour under imperfections and infirmities in the present life. It is perhaps never permitted to enjoy its fulness of delight in the present world, and it is frequently subjected to grievous and long-continued pains and diseases. But even this is the fruit of God's love, and intended to minister in other ways to our greater perfection and felicity. And this state of bodily imperfection and suffering is but for a time. It shall not be thus for ever. The body itself shall be redeemed from its imperfections by and by, and permitted to enjoy its share of blessedness in all its fulness. "We look for the Saviour from heaven," says the Apostle, "who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself." And again he tells us, in his Epistle to the Corinthians. "So also is the resurrection of the body. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory." There shall then be no more sickness, nor any more pain: the former things shall be done away, and a perfect, a glorified, and an immortal body, shall be the joyous companion of the holy and enraptured spirit, world without end.

If, then, we would imitate the benevolence of our Heavenly Father, we must endeavour to make our fellow-creatures as happy as possible. We must not be content with doing a little for them; we must try to do for them every thing that is necessary to make their happiness complete. We ought not to aim at relieving a *portion* of their wretchedness merely, we ought to aim at relieving the *whole*. We ought not to aim at adding a little to their improvement and comfort; we ought to aim at making them as wise, as good, and as happy as they are capable of becoming. The common plan of doing good is very different from this. Most people appear to have no desire to do good at all; and even of those who profess the religion of Christ, and endeavour, in some measure, to promote the welfare of their fellow-men, there are few who seem to labour with the intention of bestowing upon men all that fulness of blessedness for which they were designed. The greater number even of those who are engaged in works of charity, appear to aim only at a partial improvement of man's character and lot. They are not willing that men should be absolutely wretched; they are not willing that they should be shut out from every enjoyment; but they have no idea of attempting to raise the whole human family to a state of perfection. They would not have men naked, and houseless, and famishing; nor would they have them altogether uninstructed, or altogether destitute of spiritual and religious enjoyment; but the good they aim at bestowing is limited. There is nothing of vastness or boundlessness about their plans. Their souls do not contemplate the perfection of their race as a thing to be longed for and hoped for. There is a littleness, or a lowness in their love; there is a contractedness, a niggardliness in their plans and labours of beneficence. This littleness in our love, this niggardliness in our plans and labours of beneficence, the Saviour is wishful to cure. He wishes to raise and enlarge our thoughts; he wishes to give to our love and labours something of the divine infinity. He would have us to be perfect in goodness and felicity ourselves, and he would have us to make it our aim and our endeavour to communicate the same perfection of character and enjoyment to every child of man. "Be ye therefore merciful, as your father which is in heaven is merciful."

4. Again; our Heavenly Father exerts himself, in the labours of beneficence, to the utmost. In the accomplishment of his plans of beneficence, he employs the whole machinery of the universe, all the powers and influences of all beings, and the infinite wisdom and power and boundless resources of his own eternal mind. We are authorized, in fact, by the Scriptures of truth themselves, in saying that God does what he can for the welfare of his creatures. In the fifth chapter of Isaiah, in which the children of Israel are compared to a vineyard, he is represented as saying, "What could have been done more for my vineyard, than I have done in it?" He had exhausted, in his endeavours to bless that people, his whole storehouse of means. And we have reason to believe that he acts on the same principle towards his creatures generally. We have reason to believe, that he does for his creatures what he can; that he exerts his Almighty Power to the utmost, leaving undone nothing that his infinite understanding sees fit to be done. The wide immeasurable universe, with all its infinite variety of powers and ranks of being, is but one grand mass of means for diffusing life and blessedness. Angels minister to our happiness with pleasure; and devils are made to subserve the general good against their will. Good men do good with delight, and God makes the wrath of the wicked to praise Him, and over-rules the crimes of the selfish for the good of his creatures.

When, therefore, we are commanded to be merciful as our Father which is in heaven is merciful, we are commanded, in effect, to labour to promote the welfare of our fellow-men to the utmost extent of our ability: we are commanded to leave no means, nor any particle of influence, by which we can contribute any thing to the happiness of mankind, unemployed. We are not to employ a part of our talents in doing good, and bury or misuse the rest; the cause of human happiness is to have the whole. Our example, our domestic authority, our wealth, our powers of mind, our powers of speech, and all that influence which is given us by means of the press, must all be consecrated to the work of beneficence. This command of the Saviour requires us to abstain from all extravagance. We cannot be merciful as our Father which is in heaven is merciful, so long as we wilfully waste any thing either in costly dress or ornament, in luxuries of meats and drinks, or in any thing hurtful or needless. To be merciful as our Father which is in heaven is merciful, we must both use in doing good the talents which we have, and endeavour to make them more. Our labours of love must have no limits, but what are fixed to them by the limits of our ability.

5. Again: the love of our Heavenly Father makes no distinction of country, or rank, or colour; but does good to all without respect of persons. The black and the white, the bond and the free, the monarch and the slave, the frozen poles and the burning tropics, the wilds of Africa, the woods of America, and the gardens of Europe or of India, are all alike to him. The colour of men's skin, the place of their abode, and their rank in society, are matters of no consideration with God, except so far as they may increase their need of his assistance. The black are as dear to him as the white, and he has as much regard for the interests and feelings of the poor afflicted slave, as for those who dwell in palaces and sit on thrones.

And if we would be merciful as our Father which is in heaven is merciful, we too must love and labour to do good without respect of persons. We must not only labour for the welfare of our countrymen, or for the nations which have similar climes and complexions with ourselves: we must labour for the welfare of our whole race. We must not plead for the freedom of the white, and bind the black in chains: we must not exaggerate the claims of the British, and trample beneath our feet the claims of the French, the Germans, or the Hindoos. We must not burn with zeal for the welfare of the country in which we live, and regard with jealousy the advancement and improvement of other countries. We must love all, and we must labour to do all good. We must be citizens of the world; the friends and benefactors of the whole race of men. We must regard none as foreigners. The world must be our country, and every child of man an object of our affectionate regard.

6. The mercy of God extends to all *characters*. He is good, not only to those who love and serve him; but to the unthankful and unholy also. He causes his sun to shine on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. Such was his love to men, even when they were enemies to him, that he gave his beloved Son to die for them. He regards with pity the most profligate and impious of our race, and labours, by the manifestations of truth, by the influences of his Spirit, and by the visitations of his providence, to bring them to repentance and salvation. And if at any time they return from the evil of their ways, and with contrite spirits acknowledge their guilt and seek for mercy, he freely forgives them, and receives them to his favour.

If, therefore, we would be merciful as our Heavenly Father is merciful, we must be kind even to our greatest enemies. However unkindly men may act towards us, we must still act kindly towards them. We are not to ask, What are men's deservings? but, What are their necessities? Our business is not to recompense men for their doings, but to instruct them and do them good. "Love your enemies," says the Saviour, "bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you." If our enemy hunger, we must feed him; if he thirst, we must give him drink. As the worker in metal heaps burning coals upon the ore, until the ore be melted, and the dross be separated from the pure metal, so are we to heap favours upon our enemies, until we melt their hearts, and turn them into friends. We are not to be overcome of evil, but to overcome evil with good.

7. If we would imitate the mercy

of our Heavenly Father, we must never be weary in doing good. God has continued to exercise his goodness to the human race from the beginning of the world to the present hour. He has met with innumerable insults and provocations,—and millions have abused his love, and turned his blessings to purposes of vice and misery; yet his love has never grown weary. He has still continued to devise new plans, and to make fresh efforts to make men happy. So must it be with us, if we would be merciful as our Father which is in heaven is merciful. We must never be weary in well doing. We may meet with some who will not receive our help, and we may meet with some who will return us cruelty for our kindness; but we must still not be weary. Our plans may not prove so successful as we hoped they would do, and our labours and sacrifices may seem at times to be almost lost; still, we must not be weary. The flesh may shrink from continued toils and danger; the devil may discourage us, and hang out dark and threatening intimations of coming calamities, and even our friends may begin to say, It is enough; but we must still go forward. Our motives may be misinterpreted, our labours may be misrepresented, but we must still persevere. Men may revile and persecute us, and say all manner of evil against us falsely on account of our endeavours to benefit mankind; but we must still go forward. We may have but few to help us in our labours, and in times of persecution and trial our friends may desert us, and leave us to stand alone; yet even this must not be allowed to make us weary in well doing. Through smiles and through frowns, through good report and through evil report, through honour and through dishonour, through plenty and through want we must still pursue the great object of our life, the welfare of our fellow-men. Though bonds and imprisonments should await us, and though horrid forms of death should stare us in the face, we must still go onward. We must be faithful unto death; we must be stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord.

8. If we would be merciful as our Father which is in heaven is merciful, love must be the ruling principle of our whole soul and life. Love must mingle itself in all that we think, and speak, and do. Love must be both the foundation and the superstructure of our whole character, and the grand element of our whole being and behaviour. It is thus with God. Love is his first, his highest, his most distinguished attribute. Love is himself, his very being; for God is love. Love is the all-pervading and all-governing principle of all his plans and operations; and the bestowment of blessings is alike his one great business and delight: "He delighteth in mercy." God is the fountain of love, as the sun is the fountain of light: He is an ocean of love, unfathomable and shoreless, and he pours forth his streams and floods of blessings without measure and without end. Love mingles itself even with his judgments, and his deeds of terror are under the controul and direction of mercy. There is mercy in every thing that comes from God. There is mercy in the storm, as well as in the calm; in famine, as well as in fulness; in sickness and pestilence, as well as in health; in agony, as well as in ease; in death, as well as in life. The great end of all his dispensations, from the beginning of the world to the present time, has been to enlighten, to purify, and to bless mankind. The work of redemption is a world of love; it is benevolence embodied and unfolded in its richest, brightest, fullest, most affecting and overwhelming manifestations. It is the wonder both of heaven and earth, and it will continue a miracle and a mystery when time shall be no more. The description of God's character, and the history of His works, is the description and the history of boundless and everlasting LOVE.

If we would be merciful as our Father which is in heaven is merciful, we must die to all things else but a love to God and man. Ambition, covetousness, and pride, must all expire: envy, revenge, and wrath, and all uncharitableness, must be entirely cast out. All anxiety for self must die. We must have but one interest, but one object, and but one great all-absorbing, all-pervading, all-controlling passion, an eager, ardent, restless, boundless, ceaseless, ever-growing desire to promote the improvement and felicity of the whole race of men.

Such is the character which Christ would have us to sustain; such is the spirit by which he would have us inspired; such are the thoughts and the labours in which he would have us to employ our souls, and spend our lives. "Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father which is in heaven is merciful."

End of part first.

A SOLEMN THOUGHT.

No man can tell the extent of mischief he does, when he sins against God; and no man can tell the extent of good which he does, when he steadily obeys God's will. The man that obeys the will of God, contributes to the harmony and happiness of all worlds. The beneficent influence of a man's piety has no bounds: it spreads without all limits, and it endures throughout all ages. Even the angels in heaven are enraptured at the repentance of a sinner on earth. "I say unto you, there is joy among the angels of God, over one sinner that repenteth." The man that acts in opposition to the will of God, takes something from the happiness of all God's creation: while the man that does right, who consults in all things the will of his Maker, exerts a favourable influence on the whole race of man, and ministers occasion of new joy to every spirit in heaven. How solemn is our situation! How awful is our responsibility! How strange, how mournful, that with such solemn truths before our souls, we should ever turn aside from the path of righteousness. Sinner; while thou art persisting in rebellion against God, thou art fighting against the interests of all worlds: thou art creating misery which may know neither bounds nor end. Whilst thou art rebelling against God, thou art acting, according to the measure of thy influence, the part of a disturber, a tormentor, a destroyer of all God's creatures. Thou tormentest thyself; thou plaguest thy parents, thy wife, thy children, thy brothers and sisters, thy neighbours and friends, thy country and the world, and thy rebellions are the grief of the higher and holier orders of beings in the world unseen. Thou art adding to the weight of that mountain of miseries, which oppresses the whole creation: thou art adding fierceness and force to that whirlwind of woe, that sweeps through all lands, and spreads a blight over every thing on earth. On the other hand, thou hast it in thy power, by a return to obedience, to add to the joy both of earth and heaven. Thou hast it in thy power, by a return to obedience, to do something towards lessening the burdens of a groaning world, and giving birth to new transports and extasies in the holy and glorified spirits of heaven. Repent, sinner; humble thyself beneath the mighty hand of God. Fight against thy own peace, and against the welfare of God's universe no longer. Return to duty. Bow to the will of God, and co-operate with him in his glorious plans of diffusing light and joy throughout his boundless universe.

MR. MONTAGUE.

This eminent man is said to have been so remarkable for his reverence of the Divine name, that even the bold blasphemer was awed before him, and could not swear. A youth, who was his nephew, one day said to him, "Sir, I believe some parts of the Bible." The uncle replied, "Great condescension in you, no doubt, to believe any thing your Maker has said. Vain boy! whether you believe it or not, that word with which you trifle, shall judge you in the last day."

AN AGED MINISTER.

A venerable minister at H——— preached a sermon on the subject of eternal punishment. On the next day, it was agreed among some thoughtless young men, that one of them should go to him, and endeavour to draw him into a dispute, with a design of making a jest of him and of his doctrine. The wag accordingly went, was introduced into the minister's study, and commenced the conversation by saying, "I believe there is a small dispute between you and me, sir, and I thought I would call this morning and try to settle it." "Ha!" said the clergymen, "what it it?" "Why," replied the wag, "you say that the wicked will go into everlasting punishment, and I do not think that they will." "Oh, if that is all," answered the minister, "there is no dispute between you and me. If you turn to Matt. xxv. 46, you will find that the dispute is between you and the Lord Jesus Christ, and I advise you to go immediately and settle it with him."

A LADY.

A lady on her way from Edinburgh to Glasgow in the stage coach, was very much annoyed by a young military officer, whose conversation was interspersed with oaths. The lady sat very uneasy till she could no longer keep silence. "Sir," said she to the officer, "can you talk in the Gaelic tongue!" To this he replied in the affirmative, seemingly with great pleasure, expecting to have some conversation with the lady in that dialect. She then politely requested that if he wished to swear any more, it might be in that language, as the practice of swearing was very offensive to herself and the rest of the company. The officer was quite confounded at this smart reproof, and no more oaths were heard from him during the remainder of the journey.

A MINISTER.

Amidst the scenes of the Alps, surrounded by the sublimest demonstrations of the eternal power and Godhead of the Almighty, a wretch had the hardihood to avow and record his atheism, having written over against his name in the album at Montanvert, "an atheist." It seems as though some emotions of shame touched him at the time, for he wrote it in Greek. It caught the eye of a minister who succeeded him, and he very properly wrote underneath in the same language, "If an atheist, a fool; if not, a liar."

REV. W. GRIMSHAW.

The Rev. W. Grimshaw was once in company with a nobleman, so called, who unhappily employed his talents in the service of infidelity. He had some time before been engaged in a long dispute with two eminent divines, in which, as is usual in such cases, the victory was claimed by both sides. Meeting afterwards with Mr. G., he wished to draw him likewise into a dispute, but he declined it nearly in these words: "My lord, if you needed information, I would gladly do my utmost to assist you; but the fault is not in your head, but in your heart, which can only be reached by a Divine power; I shall pray for you, but I cannot dispute with you." His lordship, far from being offended, treated him with particular respect, and declared afterwards, that he was more pleased and more struck by the freedom, firmness, and simplicity of his answer, than by any thing he heard on the side of his opponents.

REV. A. FULLER.

On one occasion, the late Rev. A. Fuller, when travelling in the Portsmouth mail, was much annoyed by the profane conversation of two young men who sat opposite. After a time, one of them, observing his gravity, accosted him with an air of impertinence, inquiring, in rude and indelicate language, whether, on his arrival at Portsmouth, he should not indulge himself in a manner evidently corresponding with their own vicious intentions. Mr. Fuller, lowering his ample brows, and looking the inquirer full in the face, replied in a measured and solemn tone, "Sir, I fear God." Scarcely a word was uttered during the remainder of the journey.

A TRAVELLING MINISTER.

A gentleman, travelling in a stage coach, attempted to divert the company by ridiculing the Scriptures. "As to the prophecies," said he, "in particular, they were all written after the events took place." A minister in the coach, who had hitherto been silent, replied, "Sir, I beg leave to mention one particular prophecy as an exception, 2 Pet. iii. 3: 'Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers.' Now, sir, whether the event be not long after the prediction, I leave the company to judge." The mouth of the scorner was stopped.

INVESTIGATION (CONTINUED).

THE ROOT OF ALL EVIL!

EARNESTLY asking of God that we may be guided into all truth, we again prosecute our inquiry. Hitherto, to some extent, our attention has been detained by questions, which most of our readers would previously look upon as settled, and this, we doubt not, would tend to diminish the interest which otherwise would attach to a discussion of them. We are greatly mistaken, however, if we have not all been abundantly rewarded by an increase of enlightened conviction, and a considerable impetus to our zeal and activity. In our Master's strength then, and with increased anxiety, after contemplating the future universal establishment of our holy religion,—the kind of agency by which this shall be effected,—and the manifest degeneracy and consequent inefficiency of existing religious communities, we now advance, and must enter a less frequented path. We now proceed to inquire *why* the church is so degenerate. We seek the cause, in order that we may find the cure. And we ask first, is this degeneracy *necessary?* This is the sixth question of the series we proposed.

"Is there," then, "any intimation given in the Scriptures that the Christian religion would, necessarily, in succeeding ages, lose any of its power: that the experience and practice of Christians should necessarily degenerate; and that strife, and division, and inefficiency should mark the character of the Church?" We answer, at once, there is no such intimation. There is no book, nor chapter, nor verse, nor sentence of Holy Scripture, that intimates anything of the kind, either directly or indirectly. And the character of the religion also, so far from affording any indication of an *essential* or *necessary* deterioration at any period of the Church's existence, affords evidence of the contrary. The religion is like its Author, unchangeable. Christ is "the same yesterday, today, and for ever," and so is Christianity. Its doctrines are the same: they must stand eternally unaltered. They are the words of God, and "though heaven and earth should pass away, his words shall not pass away." "Not one jot or one tittle shall in anywise pass from the law until all be fulfilled." "*This Gospel,*" and this only, "must be preached for a witness to all nations," and that in all its parts. And the subjects of its influence, also, are the same. The ancient Christians were by nature children of wrath, even as we are. They were men of like passions, prejudices, and infirmities with ourselves. The agent which effected so mighty a change within them, also, is still the same. The work wrought in their hearts and exhibited in their lives, was effected, and effected solely, by the Holy Ghost. This almighty agent is unchanged, and is still promised in all its energy and fulness. Still our Heavenly Father will give his Holy Spirit, and that "not by measure," not in a "straitened" or limited degree, to them that ask him. Still the living water may be in us as abundantly, "as a well of water springing up unto everlasting life." Still, "all that will come, may come, and take of the water of life, FREELY." Consequently, we *may become* as holy, as active, and as triumphantly successful in promoting our religion, as the primitive Christians were. The same means would produce similar results.—The obstacles we have to contend with, are not greater than those which existed in early ages. Natural corruption, ignorance, prejudice, interest, and power, existed then, as well as now, but these were vanquished then, and they may be vanquished now. There is then no *necessary* deterioration of Christianity, either as to its character or power, and consequently (and which furnishes a satisfactory answer to the *seventh* question of our series, also) *there is no insurmountable obstacle to an immediate return to primitive purity, both of heart and life, by the members of the Church.*

But if the degeneracy of the Church is not a thing of necessity,—if there be no insurmountable obstacle to its immediate restoration to primitive holiness, and unity, and power, why does this degeneracy continue? If all who are willing and desirous to experience and practice all that the early Christians did, may attain to their desire, and if they may be as successful in inducing their brethren around them to follow their example, thus promoting light and truth from heart to heart, why has not the thorough reformation of the Church been already effected? *Why, after nearly four centuries have been spent in professed reformation, has so little been accomplished?* There have been numerous ameliorative movements, indeed, but why have the ultimate results of these movements generally been unsatisfactory? There have been partial reformations, but why has no one of them continued to extend itself with its *first* vigour and rapidity? Nay, why have they not acquired greater and still greater influence, wider and still wider extension, and increasingly rapid progress? Why has not the light of truth shone brighter and brighter? Why have not the successive agents employed in them, become wiser and wiser, holier and holier, and more and more efficient? For, whatever may be the *cause*, the lamentable fact will scarcely be questioned. *Revivals* of religion have, in modern ages, been both limited as to their influence, and transient as to their duration. After every period of renewed spiritual life and energy, and of consequent success, a state of inactivity, indifference, and declension in piety and zeal has generally, if not universally, succeeded. Thus has the progress of the good work been retarded, and its effects, ere long, destroyed! What is the cause of this? That there is some cause,—some obstacle to the continuance and increase of religion, is evident. The religion is essentially capable of propagating itself, but, *actually*, scarcely any general progress is witnessed. Again, we ask, "is there not a cause?"

We must also, again, call in the assistance of the metaphor we made use of previously. Why, then, does not the moral machine accomplish its destined object? Now, if the comparison we instituted will hold; if a piece of machinery is efficient so long, and only so long, as each of its parts be entire, and in order; and if *this* be the case with the moral machinery; if Christianity is efficient for the world's conversion so long, and only so long, as the *entire* system of truth be received and reduced to practice, we obtain, at once, a clue to the object of our pursuit. Here we may ground an argument which will be of the utmost value to us.

It is as follows:—If the church in our day received and reduced to practice the whole truth, it would be efficient for the world's conversion; but in our day the church is not thus efficient, *therefore*, the church in our day does not receive, and reduce to practice, the whole truth.

Say not, brethren, that we do wrong in thus employing our *reason* in searching after the cause of the church's degeneracy. "God helps them who help themselves." We use indeed, but we by no means rely upon, our reason. We have established our premises in previous articles, we now, humbly and solely relying on God for assistance, endeavour to draw those inferences and deductions, which shall bring our inquiry to some practical bearing, and permanent benefit.

We may rest assured, then, that had those revered Christian reformers, that have arisen in various parts of Christendom during the last four centuries, apprehended and continued to maintain our holy religion in all its essential parts, both as to experience and duty; if they had commenced, and continued to exhibit, and reduce to practice, *the whole truth, and nothing but the truth* of God, their success, instead of being but partial and temporary, would have been triumphant and enduring. And if *we* would learn by their experience, we must detect and avoid the causes of their failure.

What portion of Divine Truth,—what part of the Christian system, then, has been misunderstood, or neglected? Let us watch the movement of the moral machine: let us try whether, prayerfully and carefully proceeding, we cannot discover where is the impediment: where is the disorder or defect.

Often, since the reformation, have revivals been *commenced*. The "first principles" of the Gospel have at various times been declared with great success. Repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, and the operations and first-fruits of the spirit also, have been explained and taught; and the churches blessed with such teaching have flourished greatly for a time. Look at those churches ere long. But a few weeks, or months, or years at most, have passed, and they are comparatively cold, and dead, and powerless. Trace the "falling away" in them to its source. Here is the point, the *hinge* on which our INVESTIGATION turns. How did the declension commence? We beseech you, brethren, let *this* inquiry have your most serious attention. Have you never witnessed a revival, and its decline in a religious congregation? For we may now bring our inquiry into a very simple shape; we may descend from the contemplation of communities, to congregations; what will arrest a revival of religion in the one, will, if it be generally prevalent, do so in the other. Look then at those congregations which have been blessed with revivals. And, we ask, might not the first symptoms of declension be described in the following words of the Apostle, "*All mind their own, not the things which are Christ's.*" Were not first one, then another, then a third, fourth, fifth, and sixth of the members of the church, and then the generality of them, found *too busy* to attend to Christ's affairs? And in accordance with existing notions and pursuits, how could it be otherwise? Look further still. See those new converts, how zealous, how full of love, how devoted. But this is "their first love," which, you hear, those more *experienced* brethren of their's are telling them, will soon be moderated. And the sad prediction is soon verified. They engage in business. In accordance with the notions they hold, and which are held by all around them, "they must do the best they can for themselves" in business; and, as the more time and attention they give to business, the "better" they can "do" in it, they find their time for God's service is gradually decreasing. But this is not startling to them, for it is the case with the "most respectable" members of the church, yea with, perhaps, its most responsible officers. This is not all. They find that if they would be looked on, as being in "very respectable circumstances," they must become wealthy, and extend their expenditure; and in order to this they must be *very* diligent in extending their trade. Now, this is found to prevent not only their usefulness, but their holiness. They decline, they consciously decline in piety; but what can they do? "Brothers so and so, who have *done so well*," acted as they do, and *they* are among the most respectable and influential members of the church. And then, they "must provide things honest," they "cannot help it," and they proceed. The little leaven leavens the whole lump. Indifference, spiritual inactivity, and worldliness prevail. Now, in the strictest sense, "all mind their own,"—not their own *souls*, but their own temporal interests. Business extends, employments multiply, and covetousness abounds. This is the "root of all evil," and a plenteous and luxuriant produce of corruption follows.

Now we venture to say, that an inquiry as to the causes of declension of piety in each of the Christian communities now existing, would, with scarcely a single exception, exhibit a similar result. Inordinate desire after, and attention to, worldly possessions and pursuits, has been the grand cause of their humiliation; and of the partial and transient character of revivals in them. This evil has prevented their progressive attainment of light and truth, and has eventually destroyed their first zeal and usefulness. The members of them have been taught how to begin the Christian course, but not clearly how to continue. The way to attain to true *experience* has been shown, but a fatal defect in the notions generally taught and prevalent as to *practice*, is most manifest. *Here our moral machinery is fearfully defective*, and consequently *it must be regarded as coming short, in this respect, of the teaching of Holy Scripture.*

Two or three additional considerations will place this position in a still clearer light. Wherever the nature of any vice is clearly pointed out and understood, there also the opposite of that vice,—the virtue to which it is opposed,—is also understood with equal clearness. Thus, wherever the nature of falsehood is clearly exhibited, the virtue of truth will also be duly appreciated. Yet if the one be neglected, so must be the other. But if so, how fearful is the prevailing ignorance as to lawful desires and endeavours after worldly possessions. What is covetousness? It will perhaps be replied, "inordinate desire." But what is *inordinate desire?* Who is inordinately desirous of worldly good? Where does lawful desire end? and when is it satisfied? and where does unlawful, inordinate desire commence? Who is a covetous man? The church, it is admitted on all hands, swarms with covetous members; but where are they? Point out the man. Is *he* covetous? Has he acquired more than he should? Has he retained more than he ought? Who that ventures to determine this, will not be censured as uncharitable? But if so little is known as to *what is* covetousness, how deficient must be our views as to its opposite—scriptural and well regulated desire as to the acquisition and possession of property. The truth, on this point, is therefore comparatively unknown.

Again, there is that in connection with Christianity, as now understood, which, in process of time, effects its own dissolution; and we, therefore, must conclude that we do not now understand it fully. True piety naturally leads to frugality and industry, these naturally produce wealth, wealth naturally produces worldliness, and worldliness and piety cannot exist together. "No man can serve two masters." But, in the system of religion generally received, there is nothing which counteracts this process, and yet, *unless it be counteracted,* Christianity cannot convert the world. Here again we have evidence, that prevailing notions in this respect are by no means consistent with the truth of God.

The object of our search then, we may believe, is now within our reach. The grand obstacle to the reformation of the church, and the conversion of the world, is now, we may conclude, detected. We have already the truth as to experience, but not the whole truth as to practice. The defective part of the system of religion now generally received by what are called the evangelical sects, is the *practical part.* The way to enter into the kingdom of Heaven is pretty generally understood, but that which is to guide the Christian safely and steadily through an ensnaring world: that doctrine which is so to shape the course of his future life as to make him a light of the world, and which must consequently determine the external character of the church at large, *that* portion of the Christian system is *not* understood. In this respect the notions of the church and those of the world differ little from each other. The "professing" part of the community does indeed admit, theoretically, that a Christian should live solely for God; should look upon all he has as God's; and do all he does to the glory of God, but all this is utterly denied, in effect, by other notions which are held at the same time, and by the same parties. Now the vast importance of this portion of Christian truth can by no means be estimated, if we look at it only as regarding one particular virtue, that of liberality, or one solitary vice, that of covetousness. The whole course of a man's life, and the whole of his character and conduct, is formed and modelled by his notions and desires respecting the acquisition and the possession of worldly good. And as the church must assume the character of its component members, an error in this respect must affect every other portion of doctrine, discipline, or practice. Here, then, we also discover the cause of the prevailing deviation from truth and purity in a great variety of ways and respects. This is the root; the other evils, generally, are the branches. The system of religious doctrine now generally held, does not prevent the prevalence of the love of money; and "the love of money is the root of all evil!" Now, in order to prevent the growth of the tree effectually, we must strike at the root; the root itself, indeed, must be destroyed. In vain, until this be effected, are all attempts to purify the church, or to convert the world. Partial success, indeed, may crown sincere and faithful endeavours; but no revival can be permanent, unless the love of money can be prevented, and the introduction of a worldly spirit, and worldly notions, avoided. And this can be done, and can be done *only,* by the reception and practice of the whole *truth* in this respect. So far, then, reason, enlightened by Scripture, has pointed out our way.

But all that we have hitherto advanced is abundantly confirmed so soon as we take our next step. So soon as we come to the Sacred Oracles, and inquire what they teach respecting the acquisition, the possession, and the use of property, (it is these things which occupy nine-tenths of the waking moments of men generally), we perceive more clearly than ever how defective are prevailing notions; and how ignorant the church is of this portion of divine requisition. An inquirer is startled at the very outset. If he goes about the inquiry as he ought, he seeks to know both the precepts and examples given him in the Scriptures. But so soon as he considers the precepts as to this particular, he finds that the whole of the explicit, strong, and decisive passages, with scarcely an exception, are overlooked or manifestly explained away. That scarcely one of *them* is ever made the subject of a sermon, nor does one man in a thousand look upon them as commands to be obeyed by him. And then, if he considers the example of the early Christians, he finds it utterly opposed to the practice of modern Christians. Nay, so far is it from being regarded as an example, that it is looked upon as altogether wild and foolish. Nay, more, it is considered in any but its proper light. It is generally believed to have been a renunciation of all private property; but an impartial inquirer at once perceives this was not the case. The conduct we refer to, is now supposed to have been peculiar to the church at Jerusalem; but all Christian antiquity declares the contrary. Hence the inquirer after *truth*, finds both precept and example unceremoniously and fatally set aside, and the appalling cause of the church's continued degeneracy flashes still more vividly before his mind.

We must now refer our readers to several of the pamphlets and tracts which have recently appeared on this particular subject,—the Doctrine of Holy Scripture, as to the Desires and Pursuits of a Christian, with Reference to Worldly Good. They are advertised on the cover of this, our periodical, and are, as will be seen, by various authors, and on various branches of the subject. In one or other of them we believe the whole matter is discussed.

We cannot now enter into the question, but in future numbers of the *Investigator* it will have due attention, and special efforts will be made to destroy "*the love of money*," and to bring men to employ their worldly property in strict accordance with the directions of Holy Writ. The matter is of first-rate, nay, of paramount importance. The prevailing ignorance on this subject, as we have seen, is fatally and fearfully destructive of religion.—Even the *terms* which must be used require to be explained. The words "covetousness," "treasure," "wealth," "riches," "property," &c., &c., must be much more definitely used than they now are, or we shall be unable to distinguish between vice and virtue: between truth and error.

Our next article will conclude the present series, and in it we shall endeavour to present an outline of scriptural requisition as to the particulars in which prevailing systems of religion have been found to be deficient, and a few hints as to the means by which, and by which only, universal, entire, and permanently efficient Christianity may be revived. And this will be the answer to the two last of our proposed questions.

(To be concluded in our next.)

REPROOFS GIVEN TO UNBELIEVERS, &c.

REV. J. ARMSTRONG.

[The following anecdote may be known to many, but still we think it right to give it a place in the *Investigator*.]

Several years ago, the Rev. James Armstrong preached at Harmony, near the Wabash, in America; when a doctor of that place, a professed deist or infidel, called on his associates to accompany him while he "attacked the methodists," as he said. At first, he asked Mr. Armstrong if he followed preaching to save souls. He answered in the affirmative. He then inquired, "Did you ever see a soul?" "No." "Did you ever hear a soul?" "No." "Did you ever taste a soul?" "No." "Did you ever smell a soul?" "No." "Did you ever feel a soul?" "Yes, thank God," said Mr. Armstrong. "Well," said the doctor, "there are four of the five senses against one that there is no soul." Mr. Armstrong then asked the gentleman if he was a doctor of medicine, and he was also answered in the affirmative. He then asked the doctor, "Did you ever see a pain?" "No." "Did you ever hear a pain?" "No." "Did you ever taste a pain?" "No." "Did you ever smell a pain!" "No." "Did you ever feel a pain?" "Yes." Mr. Armstrong then said, "There are also four senses against one, to prove that there is no such thing as a pain; and yet, sir, you know that there is a pain, and I know there is a soul." The doctor appeared confounded, and walked off.

A LITERARY GENTLEMAN.

Many years ago, a gentleman lived in intimate association with some literary friends, who met together once a week. In the freedom of this social intercourse, he had ample opportunities of ascertaining their peculiar habits of mind, and remarked, with deep regret, a general alienation from the sentiments and principles of real religion. One of them in particular, to whom he was on many accounts most attached, scorned the restraints of religion, and abandoned himself to the pleasures of the world. Circumstances at length led the gentleman to leave that place, and on parting with his acquaintance at the corner of a street, he summoned up his moral courage to pronounce the following words:—"We now part, probably to meet no more on earth. We have sometimes discussed, and you have always refused to regard the appeals of scriptural truth. One word, and I have done. O remember that you have a soul, an immortal soul: will you finally consent to lose it in endless perdition, for the sake of paltry and fleeting indulgences? Farewell."

Each now disappeared from the other, in the crowd of life; and pursued a very different course. Ten, twenty, thirty years elapsed. The gentleman was one day standing at his door, when another gentleman was passing by in great haste; but a momentary glance induced him to stop, and to address him, "Sir, is not your name M—?"

"It is;" and a sudden reminiscence led him to add, "And is not yours G—?"

"You are right. Do you remember what you said at our separation at the corner of S— street, thirty years ago?"

"I have a faint recollection."

"But I have a strong one. I am another man. You left me a man of the world, and an enemy of the cross of Christ: I am now, and have been during many years, a member of a Christian church, and you are the cause. The word was 'in season:' I could not rid myself of it; I was forced by it to reflection; yes, I thought on my ways, and turned to God and happiness."

MINISTERS AND THE YOUNG.

No. 2.

We said that in the behaviour of some professing Christians there is a particular want of attention to the spiritual interests of those young persons, the children of other parents, that come into their hands as servants and apprentices, or are under their employ in other ways. There are those, we know, and we are happy in being able to say it, who adopt the young placed in their hands as children given them by the Lord, and who take them to their *hearts* as well as to their tables, and with the affection and solicitude of genuine Christians, strive in every way they can to do them good. They use them kindly, and win their love; they live before them as becomes the Gospel of Christ, and to their good example they add their instructions and their prayers. They call them to the family altar; they take them to the house of God, and they allow them every opportunity, and furnish them with every facility in their power, for improving in knowledge and in holiness. There are some also who pay considerable attention to the moral and spiritual welfare of the young who are merely in their employ. They have built schools in connexion with their factories, erected places of worship in their neighbourhoods, and procured for their work-people the privilege of religious instruction both on the Sabbath and on the week day. They have forbidden alehouses to be opened on their premises, and have dismissed incorrigible drunkards and profligates from their employ. Some have established evening schools for the benefit of elder youths, to place within their reach a knowledge of those branches of useful learning, which, without such means, they would not be able to acquire. Some have distributed tracts amongst their work-people, formed libraries, and paid peculiar attention to the general management of their establishments with a view to the highest interests of the persons in their employ. These are lovely and laudable examples; but there are many who make mention of the name of Christ, by whom they are not yet followed. There are many, alas, whose behaviour towards the young who live in their houses, or work in their factories or fields, is of a very different character. Many masters appear to consider their apprentices as placed in their hands to learn a business merely, or to be kept from want; and they use them accordingly. They look at their indentures, and keep in mind the law of the land perhaps; but they forget the great law of love. To one apprentice they give instruction in his business, and to another they give commands and food, and then consider their work as done. They will attend to their morals so far as may seem necessary to prevent their youthful charge from becoming troublesome to themselves; but as for sedulous, and pious, and continued efforts for their salvation, these form no part of their plan.

With respect to those who have young men only as work-people in their factories, or mines, or fields, neglect of their souls is still more prevalent perhaps, and shows itself more openly. "What business is it of mine," said one, when application was made to him in behalf of one of his aged and worn-out workmen, who had spent upwards of sixty years in his and in his father's service; "What business is it of mine, to provide for old helpless men; I paid him his wages while he did his work." There are some who would join us in condemning the inhuman and unnatural conduct of this man towards the body of his aged servant, who are themselves grievously defective in their duty to the souls of their workmen. There are those who would not leave a worn-out servant to famish, who yet leave the souls of their workmen a prey to the devil. "What business is it of ours," their actions say, "to look after their souls? There are places of worship and schools, they may go if they please: they have parents and teachers, and they may learn if they please; we do not hinder them." Thus some myriads of our young men are in the hands of those who "care not for their souls;" thus some thousands of masters, who would wish to be reckoned Christians, suffer opportunities of doing everlasting good to so important a portion of society, to pass away unimproved without concern.

Not only is nothing done for the cultivation of their minds, and the promotion of their spiritual interests, but many things are allowed which tend directly to corrupt their morals and undo their souls. Drunken, and debauched, and blaspheming characters are allowed to remain in their establishments, and sow the seeds of infidelity and all iniquity in the hearts of the young. Nurseries of drunkenness and gaming are even allowed on their premises, and in some cases the gains of unrighteousness are put into the master's purse. A multitude of lawless and godless men grow up under their eye, and go forth into society to spread immoral and destructive influences through all the land, and they make not an effort to bring the evil to a close.

The influence of the minister of the Gospel may reach this order of delinquents also, and do something towards their reformation. Most of those masters of whom we have been speaking, and indeed a great portion of all the masters in the kingdom, attend some place of worship, and thus furnish the minister of Christ with opportunities of showing them their sins, and pointing out to them the way of duty. Many would take offence, no doubt, if they found that the Gospel was made each Sabbath to condemn their practices, and some of them would leave our ministry; but whither would they go? If all the ambassadors of Christ would unite together in the faithful discharge of their duties, the guilty masters would have to give up *every* place of worship, and renounce their pretensions to religion altogether, or else be content to hear the truth and repent. If the truth were unfolded and applied in a faithful and affectionate manner, many *would* repent, and would set themselves to correct the evil in the fear of God. Their example would not be lost upon their neighbours, but others also would be drawn to duty, and led to consult the welfare of their people's souls. If books were joined with sermons, and if faithful and tender admonition and expostulation in private were also added, the happy results would be more extensive. An entirely new course of proceeding on the part of masters might be looked for, and the thousands of young persons who now grow up in ignorance and depravity, might become in early life the sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty.

I dare not say that, as ministers of the Gospel, we are not in part guilty of the evil of which we complain, in that we have so seldom and so partially, and in terms so general and so vague, urged upon our hearers the principles of Christian duty. It would seem impossible that, in a land like ours, people bearing the Christian name, and attending weekly on the ministry of the word, should be so indifferent to the interests of their brethren, if the word were administered with fidelity. We have slept while these unchristian customs have sprung up around us; we have been at ease, while Satan has been undermining the order and happiness of society, and making even the professed disciples of Christ the instruments of his destructive schemes. But let the ministers of truth arise, and commence their work afresh. Let the precepts of Jesus, and the principles of his benevolent doctrine, be made plain to all that hear them. Let it be perpetually published, that masters and servants are alike the servants and the offspring of God; that rich and poor are fashioned by the same hand, and ransomed with the same blood; that it is the appointment of God that we should do each other good as we have opportunity, and that every one should especially labour to do good to the *souls* that are placed under his care; and we may then expect to see the day when our merchants and our manufacturers shall make their premises nurseries of piety, and when all that have had entrusted to them a human being, shall nurse and rear it as a candidate for glory.

Ministers of the Gospel will have greater influence over others, in proportion to the holiness and excellence of their own character, and the ability and zeal with which they fulfil their ministry. To increase our opportunities of doing good, and to enable us the more extensively and speedily to form the sentiments and habits of mankind according to the truth and precepts of the Gospel, we ought to give all diligence to improve in every branch of holiness, and to abound in all the excellencies of the ministerial character. We should live above the world, and be uninfected with its spirit. We should have but one object, to glorify God in the salvation of souls; and to this object we should make ourselves a living sacrifice. It should be seen in all our tempers and behaviour,—it should be heard in all our conversation,—it should be manifest from all our labours, that we have renounced all selfish interests, and that we are living and labouring only for our Saviour and the souls of men. There should be that decision in our character, and that elevation and fervour in our piety, and that devotedness and singleness of aim in all our labours, as should make both the christian and the worldling feel that we are men of God, and that we are living for another world. This would give force to all we say. Our advices would be revered as oracles, our reproofs and warnings would shake the souls of the guilty like thunder. While careful thus to excel in piety, we should labour to excel in knowledge also. We should store our minds with all the treasures of divine truth, and furnish ourselves with so much knowledge of the works of God and of the ways of men, as would enable us to give the best instruction to every man, according as his necessities might require. We should seek fuller measures of the mercy and benevolence of Christ, that the truth we preach may be steeped in tenderness and love. We should improve our talents to the utmost, that the influence of our labours may be increased as much as possible. Ministers thus qualified for their office, would be enabled to turn the empire of the devil upside down. Doing God's work in God's own way, and with no other wish but their Maker's Glory and Men's Salvation, they would move onward, like their great captain, "conquering and to conquer." It has been said by an author of the present day, that if the ministers of the Gospel now in the churches of God sustained their proper character, and laboured in the spirit and in the manner which the Word of God requires, "in seven years the world would be at our feet." Perhaps this is saying more than is true, but we have certainly reason to believe, that an improvement in the Christian ministry would be followed by a revival of pure religion in the churches, and by the more rapid spread of religion through the world. It is certain that in proportion as ministers approach nearer to the Gospel standard of excellence, will be the success of their labours. Their word will work with increasing power, and infuse new life and energy through every part of the church. Professors of religion will be brought to a sense of their duty to the souls of their fellow-men, and sinners will be converted to God on every hand.

Much has been done for the welfare of the young, by some ministers, by the encouragement which they have given to Sabbath Schools, to the institution of libraries, to the formation of temperance societies, tract societies, and young men's societies, and of many other salutary institutions; and the success of those ministers in guiding youth into the ways of holiness, and conducting them to excellence and usefulness, may teach us how much might be done towards saving all the youth of our congregations, if the same plans were adopted and acted upon by ministers generally.

Hitherto we have spoken principally of what ministers of the Gospel might do towards the *conversion* of the young; we come now to speak of what they may do to promote the welfare of such young persons as are pious and members of the church. What is to be desired in reference to them is, first, that they should be *established* in religion; secondly, that they should increase in knowledge and in holiness; and, thirdly, that they should be rendered useful to the church and to the world.

The first thing to be desired with respect to the young disciples of Christ is, that they should be stable. Many that promise well for a time, fall back into the world; and of those who retain their station in the church, many appear to make but little progress in knowledge and piety, and still fewer do much for the cause of God and the salvation of mankind. What can ministers of the Gospel do to remedy or prevent these evils?

1. The first thing is frequently to make the establishment and improvement of young Christians the express object of our pulpit labours. That our pulpit labours may be the more successful, we should endeavour to find out the dangers and temptations to which the young members of our churches are particularly exposed, and order our remarks accordingly. We should seek an acquaintance with their views and habits, their peculiarities of disposition and situation, that we may be qualified to speak seasonably and profitably to them on all occasions, whether in public or private.

2. We should adopt some plan for bringing the young members of our churches into more frequent intercourse with those who are more experienced, more judicious, and more advanced in piety. Those churches in which the members are not brought into frequent intercourse and intimate fellowship with each other, are not rightly regulated. "They that feared the Lord," in ancient times, "spoke often one to another," and frequent assemblies of the saints, for mutual conversation and prayer, were common in the first ages of the Christian church. The Apostles urged the followers of Christ to "exhort one another daily, lest any should be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.' They cautioned them "not to forget the assembling of themselves together, but to exhort one another, and provoke one another to love and

good works." For want of this frequent intercourse of the members one with another, many churches are sickly and languishing, and some are almost extinct. The young are left uncared for and unhelped, and allowed to become a prey to idleness and lukewarmness, or to any foe that may assail them. It is not enough for the followers of Christ to meet weekly in the public assemblies; if the young are to be strengthened, instructed, and improved, frequent meetings of *believers* are necessary. The young Christian requires to be brought into closer fellowship with the church, and to this end the church requires to be brought into closer fellowship with itself. Nor are quarterly and monthly meetings of Christians sufficient. The early Christians used to assemble together every day, and the followers of Christ ought, in every case, where it is practicable, to meet either in smaller or in larger companies, once or twice a week. In *some* churches this is done, especially in *Methodist* Churches, and that with great advantage; and by the influence of the minister, the practice might be rendered general.

3. The young might also be encouraged to meet *with each other* for mutual improvement in religious knowledge, with their pastor, or some other suitable person at their head. Meetings of this kind I have known to be of very great use indeed, and I have laboured to promote them wherever it has been my lot to dwell. The members meet weekly, and each in his turn brings a discourse, written by himself, to read to the meeting. As the piece is read, the members take notes of its faults or excellencies; and when the reading is ended, state their opinions in order. Before the meeting separates, another subject is given to the person who has just read his essay, and thus as many weeks are allowed him to prepare another piece as there are members in the meeting.

At our meetings the minister generally presided, or when this could not be, the member who was deemed best qualified. A number of subjects were suggested by the chairman or by the members of the meeting, and the person who was to write took the one that seemed most suitable to his own mind. The doctrine of the discourse, its plan, its style, as well as the manner in which it was read, were all the subjects of remark; and the remarks were made with great freedom, though always without contention or unkindness. The subjects treated included the whole system of revelation, but those were always preferred, which appeared the most important, and the study of which seemed best calculated to benefit the persons to whom they were given, and the members of the meeting generally. We were desirous to promote pious feeling, as well as a good understanding of divine truth. Other young persons were allowed to attend the meeting, besides those who wrote and made remarks, but they attended only as hearers: they were not accustomed to take part in the conversation. The conversation was confined to those who were accustomed to bring written pieces. The meeting began and concluded with prayer. The number of members was not allowed to exceed ten or twelve, as that would have made the time between a person's reading of one piece and his production of another, too long. When the number of fit persons increased beyond a dozen, the meeting was divided. The president brought his piece in his turn, and submitted it to the remarks of the meeting. The president was generally last to make his remarks, but he would often give his views of the whole subject in the conclusion. The members considered their books, in a great measure, as common property; each one borrowed of his brother as he had need, and each one lent to his brethren in return with cheerfulness. The president, and sometimes other members of the meeting, would name such books as they thought would furnish instruction on the subjects to be brought before the meeting, as well as such works as they considered calculated to help the members in the formation of their style, and in the general improvement of their minds. The subjects were proposed in the simplest forms, and frequently in the express words of Scripture. One would be desired to bring forward such arguments or facts, whether from Scripture or from other sources, as tended to prove or corroborate the declaration,—

"That all things work together for good to them that love God;" another was requested to bring forward such reasons as he could collect to show "That men ought always to pray, and not to faint;" a third was requested to prove "That the sufferings of this present life are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us;" and a fourth was requested to show "That it is more blessed to give than to receive." To the less practised, the easiest subjects, put into the simplest questions, were given; and those subjects which required superior abilities, were given to elder and abler members.

The advantages of these meetings were very numerous and great. The members were kept through the week from unsuitable company, and preserved from wasting their precious time in unprofitable conversation. The minds of the members were constantly furnished with good thoughts, and kept from the intrusion of vanity and sin. A desire for knowledge was excited and strengthened, which kept the souls of the members awake, and held them in a state of readiness to receive instruction from every conversation and event. The members were kept profitably employed. Books were the companions of their leisure moments, and the collection of materials for their treatises, or the reduction of the materials they had collected to order, was their early and late employment. They were kept from wasting money in folly, and taught to expend it in purchasing useful books, and in doing good. It caused them to read books with more attention, and to gather and treasure up in their memories all striking and useful observations with the greatest care. They were more attentive to the word preached, and more careful in weighing every thing, and in "searching the Scriptures daily, whether the things which they heard were so." These meetings had a happy influence upon the conversation and behaviour of the members. They were more sober and grave than others,—less concerned about the pleasures of sense, and the luxuries of life,—better instructed in their duties, and more disposed to discharge them. Of the young men who were disciplined in this way, few turned aside to folly, while the greater part became the most useful members of the church. Some became preachers of the Gospel, and are at this time among the most acceptable and useful ministers of the present day; and others are intelligent and exemplary members of the church, and are actively and successfully engaged in promoting the interests of religion in their neighbourhoods, and throughout the world. The exercises in which the young were led to engage at these meetings, expanded their minds, and gave them a superior vigour and activity; while at the same time they tended to raise them above the common level of professing Christians in piety and charity. Religion sanctified their knowledge, and knowledge fed and purified the flame of their piety. Such meetings as these might be instituted in every town and village, and they could not fail, if well conducted, to prove of infinite advantage to the young members of the church. By means of these meetings, a more intelligent, a more holy, and a more useful race of Christians might be raised up, who should raise higher the standard of Christian attainments in the church, and be successful in spreading the blessings of religion more rapidly through the world.

In some cases I have had meetings of *younger* men, the members of which have brought collections of Scripture passages on given subjects, instead of regular discussions. In these meetings one young man was requested to collect all those passages which speak of God's love to his people, and of his care for them. Another was requested to collect those passages which enjoin the duty of prayer, or which contain promises of answers to prayer, or which record instances of answers to prayer, or which teach us in what spirit or in what manner prayer should be offered up. A third would be requested to collect all those passages which inculcate brotherly love; and a fourth, all those which speak of the heavenly world. And so with other subjects. In the conversation that followed the reading of these collections of passages, the members would point out such passages as seemed not applicable to the subject, or give quotations of such other passages on the subject as had been omitted. This also is an exercise calculated to be of great service in furnishing useful employment for the thoughts, and in leading the young disciple to the acquisition of the most important knowledge that the heart of man can possess.

4. Ministers of the Gospel might promote the interests of the young members of the church by various other means. They might publish useful books and pamphlets, and deliver lectures on various subjects, furnishing them with directions and instructions for the whole conduct of their life. I would have a minister to be almost every thing to the young of his church; and a well-informed, and kind, and zealous minister, can hardly conceive to what an extent he may, by seasonable advice and help, promote their welfare. It is no uncommon thing for young men of pious character to err in their choice of studies, and waste their time and youthful energies in the pursuit of a kind of knowledge that is not adapted either to promote their own welfare, or to render them useful to others. How easy it would be for a minister to acquaint them with the uses of different branches of science, and the extent to which it may be well to pursue them. It is common for young men to form objectionable habits, which cause a waste of their time, consume their means of living, injure their health, and exert an unhappy influence upon their minds and characters. I would have a minister prepare himself for preventing or curing these evils, and for guarding or delivering his incautious lambs from danger. The young often injure themselves by imprudent friendships and matrimonial connexions, or by errors in their choice of callings, or in the management of their affairs; when advice from their minister might have kept them out of evil. Many young Christians grow up in ignorance of the duties which must soon be required of them as husbands and fathers, as masters and servants, as rich men or as poor men, as pastors of churches, or as private members; and in consequence of their ignorance, religion loses much of the honour and advantage which it ought to receive from them. I would have a minister to see to it, that all the young of his flock are instructed in all these matters, so far as this can be done without the teachings of experience; and that such books, on all these classes of duties, are put into their hands, as are adapted to prepare them and also to dispose them to act well their part in whatever situation of life they may be called to fill. We should be as a sort of oracles to the young, to whom they may have access at all times, and whom they may consult on all subjects; and we should labour to obtain all that wisdom which is necessary to enable us to give such answers to all their inquiries, as may direct them wisely in a right way, and prove a blessing to them through all their future life.

5. We ought to furnish the shelves of our libraries, not with a view to our own wants merely, but with a view to the wants of the young also. Where they have not the means to obtain books of their own, a minister should allow his books to be at their command, so long as they are used with care.

I confess that I am asking largely of my brethren in behalf of the young of their churches, and yet it is no more, either in point of expense, or time, or labour, or care, than has been often given by many for infinitely inferior purposes. How many have expended as much time in the study of shells, of insects, of medals, coins, and petrifactions, in the collection of autographs, and in the examination or inspection of matters of curiosity only, as would have sufficed for the acquisition of infinite funds of useful knowledge. And how common is it with many, to expend as much money in things which are at best no more than ornaments and luxuries, as would more than meet the cost of all those plans of usefulness that we have recommended.—Besides, the labour, and expense, and time, would be chiefly at the commencement. Others would shortly rise up, who would share the burden with us, and the young themselves whom we had benefitted, would carry on the work when we should be no more. If all that is wasted were given to the necessitous, there could be no want: and if all the time, and treasure, and ability, which are given to trifles, wasted in useless studies and worse than useless disputations, were sacrificed to God in the cause of youth, immeasurable good would follow, and God would soon be known and glorified throughout the world.

6. When the minister has found it impossible, out of his income, to store his library so as to render it equal to the wants of his young charge, I have known him use his influence with the more wealthy in his congregation, to induce them to open their libraries, or to purchase books out of their purses, for the use of the young.

7. In most places ministers might join together to promote the interests of the young. What would be too much for one to do, might be done by a number with ease. Why should not ministers associate for this end? Why should they not join their counsels and their efforts, in forming and carrying out plans for advancing the interests of the young? Such associations, formed and conducted by truly wise and Christian men, might do every thing which the interests of the young require. In short, let ministers exert themselves as they ought, and they may, by the blessing of God, bring about a grand and glorious revolution in the state of youth. Schools may be erected, libraries may be formed, lectures on all subjects that are interesting and important to youth may be delivered, all kinds of useful books, adapted to the wants of the young, may be published and circulated, and this whole field of useful labour be made like "a well watered garden, whose waters fail not."

[The following article is by one who is accustomed to speak very plainly on all subjects that he takes in hand,—but who would not willingly give pain to any person under heaven. We insert it here, not as an attack on other systems, or as a full view of the question between the friends of Congregationalism and the advocates of Synods and Conferences; but as a brief, plain, simple statement of some of the advantages connected with the Congregational principle. It is our belief that, ultimately, all churches will be Congregational; that the time will come, when, though the members and ministers of different churches will meet together for Christian conversation, and unite for purposes of mutual counsel and assistance, no church shall be under any laws but the laws of God, nor any minister under any authority, but the authority of Jesus Christ. We have no wish to force those principles on others, but we think them worthy of consideration, and a fit subject for thorough investigation. It will be seen from the article itself, that the writer does not plead for the principle that ministers shall be allowed to preach antichristian doctrine, or do anti-christian things without being subject to admonition and disownment; but merely that the proper persons to judge of a man's doctrine, are those who hear it, and that the proper persons to judge of a man's character are those among whom he lives, who have opportunities of hearing his conversation, and observing his tempers and behaviour. We now leave the article to speak for itself.]

REASONS FOR PREFERRING THE CONGREGATIONAL SYSTEM.

1. Under the Congregational system, we have the choice of our own ministers. When under the Conference system, we were obliged to take such ministers as the Conference chose to send. Sometimes we had ministers sent amongst us of whose character and talents we knew nothing at all. In some cases men were sent to be our ministers and pastors whose names had not even been heard amongst us, till we heard the news of their appointment. At other times ministers were sent amongst us that we had reason to believe were unfit for us, if not unfit for the ministry altogether. Things are now ordered quite differently. No minister can come amongst us but such as we choose to invite, and we are not likely to invite any but those with whose character and talents we have had a fair opportunity of becoming acquainted.

2. Under the Congregational system no one can take away our mi-

nisters. So long as any ministers are willing to stay with us, and so long as we have reason to believe that their remaining with us is in accordance with the will of God, and calculated to promote the best interests of the Church and of the world, so long are we at liberty to retain them. No one has any power, at the end of a year or two, to drag them away from us, or to place them under any anathema. Under the former system the case was very different. However useful our ministers might be, however well adapted for future usefulness amongst us, we were liable, at the end of a year or two, to have them torn away from us, and sent we knew not whither. We were also liable to have our ministers publicly censured, or expelled, without any other crime, perhaps, but the crime of declaring the whole counsel of God, and faithfully carrying out the principles of the Gospel of Christ. Our ministers are now safe from such annoyances, and we are secure from those strifes and conflicts to which those evils rendered us perpetually liable.

3. Our ministers formerly came amongst us as the servants and agents of a foreign power, and were, in consequence of their absolute dependence on that power, liable to be looked on by many with coldness and suspicion. Now our ministers come simply as the servants of Christ, and as the pastors of the Churches amongst which they reside. They have no master to serve but Christ; and they have no interests to consult, but the interests of religion and the souls of men. They have no laws to enforce but the laws of God, and they have no censures or punishments to dread but those which are threatened by God himself. Their undivided affections are thus fixed upon their flocks, and their flocks repay them in return with unrestricted love and confidence.

4. Under the Conference system we were frequently required either to place ourselves in opposition to the Connexional authorities, or to submit to regulations which we could not approve. Under the present system, we escape this evil also. We have now no Lawgiver but Christ, and we know that his enactments are all right. We are complete in ourselves, and so long as we can agree among ourselves as to what is right, we are at liberty to go forward with our business in peace.

5. Under the Conference system, we were not at liberty to do what we believed it our duty to do. If we wished for any improvement in our regulations or plans of proceedings, we were not allowed to make them, without first consulting the Conference, and obtaining their concurrence. And if Conference did not think fit to take our proposals into their consideration, or if they thought proper to oppose our wishes, we might be left to struggle on under disadvantages for ten or twenty years together. Under the Congregational system things are quite different. We are now at liberty to alter our regulations, and to vary our proceedings in whatever way the will of God, as revealed in His word, may require. If we find that any of our regulations are faulty, we are not obliged to go two hundred miles, to ask permission to alter them of a number of persons who never considered the matter: we can set them aside without trouble or delay. If we find that new regulations are required, we can adopt them at once.

6. And I know of no advantages which belong to the Conference system, but what may be enjoyed under the Congregational system, as understood and advocated among us. If churches wish to have each two or three pastors, there is nothing to prevent them from having them: or if several Churches should think it best to have but one minister amongst them, there is nothing to hinder them from carrying out their views. And there is nothing in the Congregational system to hinder us from entering on any missionary enterprise, or from co-operating in any other benevolent undertaking. The Churches may still unite, though not under any human head: and they may still co-operate, though they retain unimpaired their liberties. There is no necessity for Christians or Christian Churches to enslave themselves in order to become one. That union which the Gospel requires, flourishes best where all is free. Free churches

may unite for every good work. They may join in promoting education, and in circulating Bibles, tracts, and useful books. They may unite for the assistance of such Churches as are poor and feeble, as well as for the support of the disabled ministers, and the widows and orphans of such ministers as may be called to their reward.

7. Again, free Churches are not shut out from a change of ministers. If a minister believes that he would be able better to serve the cause of Christ by removing to another Church, or to another district, there is nothing in the Congregational system to hinder him from removing; and if a Church believe that they may be better served by a change of ministers, there is nothing to hinder them from effecting a change.

8. Again, there is nothing in the principles of Congregationalism as held by us, to prevent an occasional interchange between the pastors of different Churches. The pastor of the Church at Bradford and the pastor of the Church at Newcastle may change with each other for a season, whenever such a change might be likely to prove serviceable to the Churches. And so with other Churches. There would be nothing to prevent the Churches from enjoying, on occasions, the ministrations of every pastor in the country.

9. Nor is there anything in the principles which we advocate to prevent any one, called to the office, from "doing the work of an Evangelist." The pastors themselves might be evangelists in a great measure, and others, specially called to the work, might go from place to place, both visiting the Churches, and carrying the Gospel into regions yet dark and unvisited.

10. Nor is the Congregational system less friendly to soundness in doctrine, or to necessary discipline, than the Conference system. Congregational Churches, with the Gospel for their only creed and lawbook, have not degenerated in doctrine and discipline so frequently as Churches placed under the control of Synods, General Assemblies, Convocations, and Conferences.

11. While the Congregational system is friendly to the maintenance of Christian discipline and Christian doctrine, it is in direct and irreconcileable opposition to persecution and intolerance. No minister can fall a prey to the jealous rage of rivals, nor to the criminal resentments of wounded pride, or disappointed avarice and ambition. So long as a minister commends himself by the purity of his doctrine, and by the excellency of his character, to the consciences of his flock, he is secure.

12. If a minister should prove unsound in the faith, or faulty in his moral character, and so be disowned by the Church over which he was overseer, the Congregational system does not give such minister any facilities for causing extensive divisions in the churches.

In short, the Congregational system is the system of the New Testament; it is the system appointed of God, and cannot therefore but prove, when properly carried out in all respects, most conducive to the purity and prosperity of Churches, and to the speedy conversion of the world.

[We shall be glad to hear what is to be said on the other side of this question, only let the communications be short, plain, straightforward, and good-tempered.—Ed.]

A LESSON FROM HISTORY ON THE DANGER OF INTRUSTING MEN, WHETHER LAY OR CLERICAL, WITH SPIRITUAL POWER.

The following account of the penalties inflicted by the authority of the High Court of Commission upon Dr. Leighton, father of the celebrated and pious Archbishop Leighton, is given for the purpose of showing that when any description of men, lay or clerical, or both united, become invested with great power, there is danger of its being abused, and sooner or later, employed for the purposes of oppression; so that when individuals of an independent spirit fall under the displeasure of parties thus terribly armed with the means of punishment, they find their tender mercies to be cruel. Some persons take it for granted, and sometimes plainly assert, that when the laity are associated with the ministry in the government of a religious body, there can be no injustice perpetrated towards any one, and that every thing done, must, of necessity, be fair and impartial, merely on account of its being the work of both orders conjointly. If those who write and speak thus would spend a little time in examining ecclesiastical history, they would find out their mistake. Facts beyond number, therein recorded, show that however good as to their original intention, the ultimate objects of Councils, Synods, Convocations, Assemblies, Conferences, and Commissions, their tendency has too often been, in the long run, not to advance the kingdom of Christ by the diffusion of Gospel Light, and truth, and holiness of heart and life amongst mankind, but to subjugate, by degrees, the rights of conscience; and that under the pretence of correcting errors, securing uniformity of opinion, and advancing the interests of the church, the greatest tyranny has been exercised, and the most inhuman conduct pursued in reference to some, whose only offence was, that they refused to acknowledge any other master than the Lord Jesus Christ. A few ambitious or mistaken individuals, by getting hold of power, and using it as an instrument for improper ends, have sometimes done more to bring true religion into disrepute, and to divest the Gospel of its heavenly loveliness in the eyes of mankind, than all the infidels in the world could have done. Hence, in defending Christianity, we do not find it so difficult to answer the objections of unbelievers, as to reconcile the lives and actions—the cruel and barbarous actions—of many of its professors, with its pure and merciful principles. It is time to renew attempts to put out of countenance persons who arrogate to themselves the character of being zealous for religion, and yet exemplify none of its tempers. Who talk loudly of the cause of Christ, but have in view the strengthening of their own power only, or the promotion of their own interests.

The High Commission Court was founded upon the statute of the 1st Elizabeth, which gave the ecclesiastical supremacy to the crown; and in 1584, a commission was issued, appointing a court of forty-four members, twelve of whom were to be ecclesiastics, and the rest laymen, who were empowered to visit and reform all errors, heresies, schisms, regulate opinions, and punish all breaches of uniformity in the exercise of public worship. It almost always happens, when large powers are placed in the hands of any body of men, that a few, by degrees, monopolize the whole authority; and when this is the case, the rest, though formally associated with them, are, in reality, mere cyphers, and only regarded as fit to be used when convenient, as a sort of fair covering or authority for conduct on the part of the ruling few, when its arbitrariness might otherwise be too barefaced and likely to create dissatisfaction and alarm. So it was in the case before us. Archbishop Laud, and one or two other individuals, became the leading men in the High Commission, and the remainder of the members were as nothing. What these few resolved upon, the court sanctioned; so that instead of the circumstance of the commission consisting of 48 persons, three-fourths of whom were laymen and only 12 ecclesiastics, being an advantage, it became quite the reverse, when the power had been thus usurped. If this court had consisted of only Laud and two or three others, they alone would have had all the responsibility of whatever was done; but many more persons being ostensibly associated with them, they were not so strictly accountable, though whatever was done, was virtually done by themselves only. This occurred two hundred years ago. We have, however, seen a similar state of things ourselves, on a much smaller scale, it is true, but yet the same in principle. The Methodist New Connexion Annual Committee and Conference, are constituted of preachers and laity in about equal numbers; this has a fair appearance, and whatever is decided upon is the act of the majority; this too seems fair, and it would be fair, if the actual working of the plan did not force us to believe otherwise. To describe the Annual Committee as consisting of five, or nine, or twelve persons, and the Conference as composed of sixty or seventy members, half preachers and half laymen, is plausibility itself; not a word can be said against it. But, as in the High Commission Court, though the numbers were forty-eight, Archbishop Laud, with one or two besides, had centred in themselves all the power, and did as they liked, so five or six individuals in the Methodist New Connexion have become all in all as to authority and influence. These form the Annual Committee, the Conference, and in fact, every thing. The rest are truly men of straw—mere nonentities, as to having any control. They might as well be absent as present at their meetings. The few say, Let us do or not do this or that, and it is decided accordingly. Still, we do not think that either Mr. Allin, Mr. Ridgway, or any of the five or six individuals, who hold of themselves the entire authority in the Methodist New Connexion, would be disposed to imitate every part of Archbishop Laud's conduct. We feel no doubt of their being of opinion, that a little wholesome correction might be administered with advantage to Joseph Barker for example, but as to slitting his nose, cutting off his ears, making him pay a fine of £10,000, or placing him in prison for life, and especially as to visiting him with all these punishments together, we are persuaded better things of them than that such a thought should have entered their minds. At the same time, lest at any period a spirit of persecution should unwittingly, and in regard to similar matters, come upon us, it may be well for our abhorrence of this evil to be kept alive by reviewing deeds done by unhappy bigots while under its influence in former ages. We now introduce the case of Dr. Leighton, whose crime was, that he had published a book containing sentiments offensive to those in power. One of the passages for which he was cited to appear before the High Commission was this:—"That the Church hath her laws from the Scripture, and that no king may make laws for the house of God."

"Not long after the book had been delivered to the parliament, two high-commission pursuivants arrested Dr. Leighton, as he was coming out of Blackfriars church, from hearing a sermon: and, with a multitude of staves and bills, dragged him to the house of Dr. Laud, then bishop of London. As they were carrying him along, they, all the way, called him by the opprobrious names of jesuit and traitor. He was imprisoned in the bishop of London's house, and a strong guard set over him; and there kept, without food, till seven in the evening, when Dr. Laud, bishop of London, and Dr. Corbet, bishop of Oxford, came from Fulham House, with a great number of attendants. Dr. Leighton then demanded a hearing, and one of the pursuivants made as if he should have had one. But, instead of that, the gaoler of Newgate was sent for, who came with a strong power of halberts and staves; and, clapping Dr. Leighton in irons, they carried him through a blind, hollow, subterraneous passage, into Newgate; where, opening a gate into the street (which some say, had not been opened since the days of bloody Queen Mary) they thrust him into a loathsome and ruinous dog-hole, full of rats and mice, which had no light, but what came through a little grate. There, the roof being uncovered, the snow and rain beat in upon him. He had no bedding, nor any place to make a fire, but the ruins of an old smoky chimney. There he was kept, without meat or drink, from Tuesday night to Thursday noon.

In that doleful place and condition was he kept close, with two doors fastened upon him, for the space of fifteen weeks; during which time, they suffered no friend to come near him; but, after fifteen weeks, his wife, and she alone, gained admittance.

On the fourth day after his commitment, the high-commission pursuivants, under the conduct of one of the sheriffs of London, and attended by the sheriff's men, went to Dr. Leighton's house in Blackfriars, under the pretence of seeking for jesuits books. There those sons of plunder laid violent hands upon his distressed wife, and used her with such barbarous inhumanity and indecency, as it is a shame to express. They rifled every person in the house, and held a pistol to the breast of a boy of five years old, threatening to shoot him, if he would not tell where the books were; which so affrighted the poor child, that he never recovered it all his life. They broke open presses, chests, and boxes, though the family would readily have opened them, to have facilitated their search. They tore up the very boards of the house, and destroyed every thing at their pleasure. They robbed the doctor's house, and carried off all the books and manuscripts which they could find, together with his household stuff, apparel, arms, and other things, leaving nothing which they had a mind to have; though Mrs. Leighton put them in mind, that a day of reckoning might come. They also took away a great number of Dr. Leighton's books from one Mr. Archer, with whom they had been deposited for greater security.

The keeper of Newgate denied Dr. Leighton a copy of his commitment: upon which his wife, with some other friends, repaired to one of the sheriffs of London, offering bail, according to the statute in that behalf; which statute being shown by an attorney at law, the sheriff replied, "He wished the laws of the land, and the privileges of the subject, had never been named in parliament," &c.

The creatures of the high-commission court went to Dr. Leighton, in Newgate, and would have examined him; but he refused to answer them, or acknowledge the authority of that court; though he professed himself ready to answer any officer, who came to examine him by the king's authority.

Thus Dr. Leighton (having already suffered in body, liberty, family, estate, and house;) at the end of fifteen weeks was served with a subpœna, on information, laid against him by Sir Robert Heath his majesty's attorney-general, who went to him in Newgate: and (as Dr. Leighton himself expresses it) "used him with cruelty and deceit."—Afterwards one Reeves, another tool of Bishop Laud's, went to Newgate, and, with flattering deceitful promises, got him to confess, that he wrote the book with which he was charged. After that, he went again to Newgate, and would have had Dr. Leighton to have confessed who put him upon writing the book, promising him not only pardon, but other favours, if he would frankly tell him. But the Doctor, like a brave man, would not mention one of near 500, who had set their names to his book, by way of approbation; as knowing the miseries to which he would have exposed them, by such a nomination. Upon that refusal, he was brought into the star-chamber court, and required to put in an answer to a long invective, called an information; which he did, to the satisfaction of all unprejudiced persons. He owned the writing of the book, but said it was done with no ill intention; his design being only to lay these things before the next parliament, for their consideration.

But things were carried with so high an hand, that no council dared to plead for him, nor any body to appear in his behalf.

There were other circumstances, which discovered the inveterate malice of his enemies. It appeared to four physicians, who examined the case, that poison had been given to him in Newgate: for his hair and skin came off, in a distemper which was attended with loathsome symptoms. But, notwithstanding a certificate was given under the hands of these four physicians, and an affidavit made by an attorney, that his disease was desperate, the following sentence was passed upon him, though absent, and that court unanimously decreed, June 4, 1630,

"That Dr. Leighton should be committed to the prison of the Fleet for life, and pay a fine of £10,000. (though they knew he was not worth so much) that the high commission should degrade him from his ministry; and that then he should be brought to the pillory at Westminster, while the court was sitting, and be whipped. After whipping, be set upon the pillory, a convenient time; and have one of his ears cut off, one side of his nose slit, and be branded in his face, with a double S. S. for a Sower of Sedition. That then he should be carried back to prison: and, after a few days, be pilloried again in Cheapside; and be there likewise whipped, and have the other side of his nose slit, and his other ear cut off; and then be shut up in close prison, for the remainder of his life."

That pious, merciful, and truly Christian bishop, Dr. Laud, pulled off his cap, when this horrible sentence was pronounced, and gave God thanks for it;—like one who had obtained a signal victory over his most mortal enemy.

A knight moved one of the lords about the dreadful nature of the sentence, intimating that it opened a gap to the prelates, to inflict such disgraceful punishments and tortures upon men of quality. That lord replied, "It was only *in terrorem*, and that he would not have any one think that the sentence would ever be executed." But Bishop Laud was resolved that it should be executed, and accomplished his cruel intention.

Between passing the sentence and the execution of it, Dr. Leighton found means to escape out of the Fleet prison, by the assistance (as is supposed) of two Scots gentlemen, Mr. Elphinstone and Mr. Anderson; for they were fined £500 a-piece, for helping their countrymen to fly from that infernal punishment.—However, Dr. Leighton was overtaken in Bedfordshire, and brought back to the Fleet.

November 26, part of the sentence was executed upon him, and that in a most tremendous manner; the hangman having been plied with strong drink all the night before, and likewise threatened, if he did not execute the sentence in a cruel manner.

When he came to the place of execution, besides other torments, his hands were tied to a stake, where he received thirty-six stripes on his naked back, with a triple cord, every lash whereof brought away the flesh. Then he was set in the pillory, in which he stood almost two hours in cold, frost, and snow. While he was in the pillory, one of his ears was cut off, one of his nostrils slit, and one cheek branded with a red hot iron, with the letters S. S. so that he was made a dismal spectacle of misery to God, to angels, and to men.

After that, he was remanded to prison; and the next cruel handling of him we may take in the words of Bishop Laud, who has recorded both the executions in his diary. "On that day se'nnight, his sores upon his back, ear, nose, and face, being not yet cured, he was whipped again, at the pillory in Cheapside; and had the remainder of his sentence executed upon him, by cutting off the other ear, slitting the other side of his nose, and branding the other cheek."

Being so broken with such terrible sufferings, he was unable to walk. However, the warden of the Fleet would not suffer him to be carried in a coach; but hurried him away, by water, to the Fleet, to the farther endangering of his life.

In that prison, he went through much harsh and cruel usage, for the space of eight years; paying more for a room than the value of it; and not being allowed a bit of bread or drop of water, but what he or his friends paid for. And, to increase his misery, the clerk of the Fleet sent for him to his office, and (without warrant, or any fresh offence given) set eight strong fellows upon him, who tore his clothes, and bruised his body, so that he never was well after; and then carried him, head and heels, to that loathsome place, the common gaol; where (besides the filthiness of the place, and vileness of the company) various projects were set on foot to take away his life.

In the year 1640, he presented a petition to the long parliament, setting forth a brief narrative of his great and many sufferings and hardships. While the petition was reading, the House of Commons burst out into tears. And the clerk of that house was ordered to stop, once and again, until they had given some vent to their compassion; and recovered themselves to such a composure of mind, as to be fit to attend and hear the rest.

When they had considered the case, they released him from prison, and voted that Dr. Laud, then Archbishop of Canterbury, should give satisfaction to Dr. Leighton, for the damages sustained, by fifteen weeks imprisonment in Newgate, upon the said bishop's warrant, &c. They likewise voted, that the fine of £10,000, the sentence of corporal punishment, the execution thereof, and the imprisonment thereupon, were all illegal. But no sufficient reparation, in the world, could possibly be made to a man so highly injured.

[Alas for man when he accepts of power over his fellow-man.—Ed.]

REVIEW, &c.

The Justice and Forbearance of the Methodist New Connexion Conference, as they were illustrated in the Case of W. Trotter, giving a complete Account of his Trial before the Halifax Conference, with an Appendix, containing a full Answer to sundry Tracts or Pamphlets published by J. H. Robinson and T. Allin, in Vindication of the Conference, and in Opposition to the Brief Report of the Conference Proceedings published by Joseph Barker and William Trotter; and a more Copious Report of those parts of the Conference Proceedings which have been called in Question by the above named Writers and others, from Notes taken at the Time. By W. Trotter.

It is a difficult matter to decide how far it is proper to expose to public view the faults of professing Christians. The world is disposed to identify religion itself with their conduct; and there is danger, if we be forward to take occasion to exhibit every inadvertency, of our becoming the auxiliaries of scoffing and wicked men. It is, besides, a breach of Christian charity towards our brethren, and can do no good to make their weaknesses and imperfections more prominent than necessity requires. The rule to be observed seems to be this: when any one has merely been "overtaken in a fault," and the general character is consistent with the Gospel, while we may deal faithfully with the party in private, we ought not to make the error public until he has done something to bring odium upon the cause of religion. But if the offence be repeated after admonition, and there is little or no hope of amendment, then, not openly to show our abhorrence of it, is to become "a partaker of another man's sin."

When we first saw the notice of Mr. Trotter's intended publication, we had doubts as to its propriety on many accounts. We did not then, however, fully understand his case, nor its bearing upon the position of other ministers, and we were guided by a disinclination to have the conduct of the officials in the Methodist New Connexion exposed further than it has been in reference to the late Conference. We knew it could not be justified, and were disposed to think it had already been sufficiently condemned.—These were our first thoughts on the subject. Since then we have read Mr. Trotter's pamphlet, and we must say, in the most deliberate terms, that not only is Mr. Trotter justifiable in laying the statement of his expulsion before the Christian public, but that it was his duty to do so; notwithstanding the pain which it must occasion in the minds of all who have any real concern for the credit of religion and liberty of conscience. That a number of men in the middle of the 19th century, managing the affairs of a Christian denomination which has paraded itself as being more liberal and constitutional in its character than other sects, and which has been accustomed for near forty years, to charge the Wesleyan Body with being Popish and arbitrary, should so far outrage all decency as to discontinue Mr. Trotter as a minister, not for breaking its rules, or being defective in ability, character, or laboriousness, but because he disagreed with their decision in Mr. Barker's case, and would not slavishly pledge himself to abstain from assisting him in his project for diffusing religious knowledge by the circulation of cheap books, is truly astounding. If the individuals who have acted so despotically towards Mr. Trotter, can stand unabashed in the presence of Protestant Englishmen after his narrative gets abroad, their faces must be covered with more than brass; and as for understanding the rights of conscience or even the principles of common justice, they must either make no pretensions thereto, or if they do, it can only add to their disgrace.

The reader will, by this time, know something of the character and tendency of the Christian Investigator; will he believe that it is the identical work which Mr. Barker had planned, with a view of informing and stirring up men to serve God and promote the Gospel of his Son Jesus Christ, and that it was because Mr. Trotter purposed to render some aid in carrying out Mr. Barker's project, and would not at the bidding of a few individuals, who govern the New Connexion, promise to withdraw from it, that he was expelled! Expelled, contrary to rule, to justice, to the gospel; merely because he thereby brought upon himself the displeasure of certain heads of the body, who exercise the power they have got hold of, in the most absolute manner.

W. Trotter's pamphlet, is a very important production, and ought to be read by all who feel interested in the question of religious liberty, and it should especially be read and pondered by the ministers and members of the Methodist New Connexion. We cannot give an outline of the pamphlet, we have not room, and it is not necessary. The title tells you what you are to expect as to *matter*, and nothing can give an adequate idea of the clear, the calm, the orderly, and the powerful manner in which the subject is handled, but a perusal of it for yourselves. It is an awful, a tremendous pamphlet. The prophetic motto from Isaiah xxix. 20, 21, is a solemn fearful presage, and both the pamphlet and passing events prove, that it must be fulfilled. It is a terrible thing for men to fight against the eternal principles of righteousness and truth,—it is a terrible thing to fight against God.

It may not be amiss, especially as we cannot quote from the body of the work, to give the dedication of the pamphlet.

DEDICATION.

"To the Travelling Preachers of the Methodist New Connexion, any one of whom, without having violated any rule of the Body, or given any cause of complaint as to his moral conduct, or the performance as to his ministerial duties, may, like the author, become obnoxious to the governing few, who can set aside, or execute the law at their pleasure, and may thus, in common with the writer, be unjustly separated from a community, for the welfare and prosperity of which, they have sighed and toiled, this little work is respectfully dedicated.

In the hope that the chains which bind them will soon be broken; and praying that they, with the whole Church of God, may be inspired with fortitude and resolution to throw off every yoke but the yoke of Christ, the writer of the following pages subscribes himself,

Their affectionate brother in the Gospel,
W. TROTTER."

We add no more, but a request to our readers to read the work. Read it for yourselves. READ IT!

INTELLIGENCE.

We receive cheering intelligence from every quarter: the principles of evangelical reform appear to be spreading in every direction. The circulation of the Investigator is already such as to enable it to pay its way, and it is increasing every fortnight; and the demand for other publications of a thorough-going spiritual character continues also.

The churches in the north continue to be favoured by God, with peace and prosperity. We see nothing but loving, cheerful and harmonious co-operation, and almost every society and congregation in the district is increasing both in numbers and in labours for the salvation of souls.

In Newcastle a meeting of young men has been commenced, and is held every Saturday evening. The object of the meeting is the improvement of the young in useful knowledge and in true holiness, and the cultivation of their talents for general utility. A number of the elder members of the church attend the meeting, and direct its proceedings. The meetings are begun and concluded with prayer, and the rest of the time, thus far, has been spent in reading from Watts on the Improvement of the Mind, and in conversation on what was read. I ought to state that the time of the *first* meeting was principally spent in conversation on the acquisition of knowledge. Remarks were made on the importance of knowledge,—on the best method of acquiring knowledge,—on the difficulties to be met with in the acquisition of knowledge,—on the helps and encouragements to be looked for in the acquisition of knowledge,—on the advantages to be expected from the improvement of the minds of the young, and on other subjects of a similar character. The topic which has principally engaged the attention of the meetings since has been the method to be pursued in reading books and in conversation, so as to render reading and conversation as profitable as possible. The meetings have been very well attended, though held on a busy night.

It is expected that the meeting will be divided shortly, and that one portion will meet on the Friday evenings and the other on the Saturday evening. A division of the meeting seems to be needful, in order to afford an opportunity of adapting the proceedings of the meetings to the different ages, capacities, and wants of the members. The meeting on Saturday evening may probably be conducted, in a great measure, on the plan pursued at present, but not without such alterations as the improvement of the members may require; while the meeting on Friday evening may probably be conducted on the plan described in the article entitled, "*Ministers and the Young*," page 174 of this work.

Two meetings have been held, of such male members of the church as have the opportunity and disposition to unite in labours for spreading the light and influence of the Gospel in the darker and more neglected parts of the town and neighbourhood. A goodly number attended, and a plan of operations was agreed upon. The friends joined themselves together by twos and threes, for the purpose of visiting the people in the alleys and lanes of the town, and using such means as may seem best to promote their welfare. Each division of this little army pursues its own plan of operation. Some read to the people portions of the Sacred Scriptures, others read portions of religious tracts and books: some hold prayer meetings, some give exhortations, others preach, and some perhaps use all these means by turns. Once a month they all meet together, to give a report of their proceedings, or of what God has been pleased to do by their means, and to arrange for further operations. A very considerable number of persons are thus engaged, and the number of the labourers, we believe, is increasing.

Some of the female members are wishful to have a meeting of a somewhat similar description, that they also may unite in some plan of useful labours; and a meeting is expected to be shortly called accordingly.

The Gateshead friends have had the labours of R. Hamilton of Kilmarnock, for a short time, but he has not as yet been invited to become their pastor: the subject was expected to be considered by the Quarterly Meeting to be held last Monday.

S. S. Barton, who was employed till lately as a missionary in Ireland, under the direction of the Methodist New Connexion Conference, has relinquished his former situation, and is at present labouring in connection with the Newcastle friends.

S. Sayce has commenced his labours in Stalybridge, and we understand that things are peaceful and prosperous there. J. Walker is labouring with success at Hyde; and T. Sturges continues his labours at Mottram, Newton, &c.

A considerable number of friends, with about thirty local preachers, have united together on Gospel principles in the Staffordshire Potteries. The friends at Hanley have taken a large room for worship, capable of holding six or seven hundred persons. J. Barker lectured in the room on the evening of the 10th of last month. The place was crowded, and many hundreds came and were unable to get in. W. Trotter preached in the place the Sabbath following, and lectured there or in the neighbourhood, we understand, on the two following evenings. The church is in a prosperous state. Besides the upper room for worship, there are two commodious rooms underneath, which are to be used for schools.

The friends at Tunstall, we understand, have secured ground for a new chapel. At Stoke the society or congregation has been doubled. At Newcastle also things are prosperous, and at Burslem a union has taken place, we are informed, between the friends who have lately adopted the Congregational principle, and a number of friends formerly united together as Christian Teetotallers. At Fenton also, we believe that things are going on well. From Longton we have no information. The friends at Sneyd Green, we believe, are all agreed to have one Lord and one faith, Christ and his Gospel.

The friends at Berry Brow, near Huddersfield, opened a place for worship on the twelfth instant. In the forenoon J. Barker preached to a large congregation in the open air, after which seventeen children, we understand, were publicly dedicated to God. The friends who were resolved to unite in Christian fellowship, on purely Gospel terms, then adjourned to their new place of worship, where they were formed into a church, and took together bread and wine in commemoration of their Saviour's dying love. In the afternoon and evening J. Barker preached in the Philosophical Hall, Huddersfield. The place, which is capable of holding sixteen or eighteen hundred people was crowded on both occasions, and a gracious and powerful impression appeared to be produced.

On Monday evening the 13th ult., J Barker lectured, on Evangelical Reform, to a crowded audience at Mossley, in the large school-room. On Tuesday evening he lectured at Stockport, on the Great Hindrances to the more Rapid Spread of the Religion of Christ. The lecture was delivered in a room in Howard-street, Wharf-street, Portwood, which has been fitted up by a number of Christian friends as a place of worship. The room was much crowded, and the people were very attentive, and apparently favourably impressed. After the lecture a short time was spent in hearing and answering questions respecting the matters advanced in the lecture, and the principles and intended proceedings of the church connected with the place. Every thing was peaceful, and the results were satisfactory.

On Wednesday evening the 14th ult., J. Barker lectured on Revivals of Religion at Mottram, near Stalybridge. The chapel was much crowded, the audience was very attentive, and a gracious and powerful influence pervaded the meeting.

On Thursday evening J. Barker lectured on Evangelical Reform, in a large school-room, at Ashton-under-Lyne. The room, which is capable of holding many hundreds, if not a thousand, was crowded to excess, and numbers stood listening at the windows outside. After the lecture some time was spent in hearing and answering questions. The feeling was powerful in favour of Gospel principles.

A number of friends at Oldham, from sixty to a hundred, have laid aside human authority, and have come to a determination to hold their privileges henceforth directly from Christ himself under the New Testament. At Delph the whole society have taken the same step. A number of friends at Lees have begun to meet on the same principle. What they are doing at Mossley at present, we do not exactly know. There are many there we know, that are resolved to have the whole Gospel, and nothing but the Gospel; but what particular steps they intend to take we do not know.*

A number of friends at Bolton have become a congregational church. They have resolved to keep a registry of all the members' names, and they have appointed two deacons to inquire into cases of sickness and distress, and to afford suitable relief. While they lay down the principle that every one has a right to judge what God requires of him, and to act accordingly, they do nevertheless hold fast the principle, that it is the duty of the church to disown all who reject the Gospel of Christ, or act in opposition to its teachings.

The friends in Wales are going on prosperously. On the 8th of last month J. Barker delivered a lecture at Hawarden in Wales, on Evangelical Reform, to a large assembly in the open air. After the lecture, W. Cooke, of Liverpool, stood up and addressed the meeting. The discussion, together with the lecture, continued for about four hours. W. Cooke did not assail the principles advanced in J. Barker's lectures, but dwelt principally on personal matters. There were persons present who had come from Liverpool, Chester, Holywell, and even from the neighbourhood of Dudley, a distance of eighty miles, on purpose to hear the discussion. The results were exceedingly satisfactory.

On the evening of the same day J. Barker lectured to a very crowded audience in the Independent Chapel, Buckley, Wales. There was no discussion after, as the minister and friends of the chapel had lent the chapel on condition that no discussion should be allowed.

The friends in Wales have engaged or purchased ground for a new chapel, between Hawarden and Buckley, and they have a good prospect of having it shortly erected. We hope they will steer as clear of chapel debts as possible, and we are inclined to think that the best plan is to have chapels free. We hope that all new places of worship will be built as plain and cheap as possible, so as to be truly serviceable, and that the plan of free seats will be immediately aimed at. If there be equality no where else, there ought to be equality in the places of worship. Make a comfortable provision for all, but make nothing more for any. The ancient Wesleyan, or the present Quaker plan, is the best.

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* Since the above was written, the friends there have had a meeting: the results may be stated in our next.

The friends at Huddersfield have engaged a room for meeting, and have probably commenced their meetings by this.

We are informed by a friend from Scotland that John Bakewell, Editor of the New Connexion Magazine, has been lately preaching for the Congregational Methodist Church in Glasgow, to afford them an opportunity of judging whether it would be advisable for them to invite him to become their pastor. The church, we are told, by a considerable majority, came to the resolution to accept him as their pastor, and wrote to him accordingly, and the matter was supposed to be settled. In consequence, however, of some one informing him, invidiously, as is supposed, that there was a minority opposed to his coming, J. Bakewell has, we understand, declined the call for the present.

We understand that a number of the leading ministers are adopting and avowing the principles of church polity advocated in this publication.

We are informed that friends in Stockport, Sheffield, Dudley, and elsewhere, have had notice, that unless they refrain from selling the Christian Investigator, and other works of J. Barker, &c. they will be expelled the Methodist New Connexion. We hope our friends will seek help from God in the day of their trial, and that they will be enabled to maintain their Christian liberty, and to preserve their consciences pure.

We hope the friends who unite together on those principles will labour diligently to do the principles honour, by a loving temper, and by ealous and abundant labours in the cause of God and human happiness. "See that ye walk worthy of the calling with which ye are called, with all lowliness, and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavouring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace." "Be wise as serpents, and harmless as doves." "The wisdom that is from above, is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without respect of persons, and without hypocrisy." "See then that ye love one another with pure hearts fervently." "As ye have opportunity, do good to all men, especially to those of the household of faith." "Be careful for nothing, but in everything, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God: and the peace of God, that passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." "Let all your things be done in charity." And "do all things without murmurings and disputings; that ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights of the world; holding forth the word of life, that we may rejoice in the day of Christ, that we have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain. Yea, and if we be offered up on the sacrifice of your faith, we joy and rejoice with you all." "Be ye, therefore, stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord; forasmuch as ye know that your labour shall not be in vain in the Lord." "We desire that every one of you should show the same diligence, to the full assurance of hope to the end: that ye be not slothful, but followers of those who through faith and patience are inheriting the promises." "And now, brethren, we commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified." "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all, Amen."

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THE
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INVESTIGATION. (Concluded.)

THE REMEDY.

In this, our concluding article, we are to endeavour to describe that important and essential portion of the Gospel of Christ, which we have previously said, must shape and mould the external character of Christians generally, and by consequence, give a similar character to the Christian Church collectively. We have also to endeavour to point out the means by which a return to "first works," and a recovery of "first love" may, under the blessing and furtherance of the great Head of the Church, be effected.

When, however, we call this our *concluding* article of Investigation; we only mean that it will conclude the series of which it forms a part. For, the great questions of the church's reformation, and the world's conversion, include so vast a variety of topics for consideration and investigation, that we have, as yet, not been able even to mention many of them. We may, therefore, with great propriety, look upon ourselves as just engaging in our arduous task; and we may call the series of articles we are about to conclude, a series of *introductory hints*, or trains of reasoning,—reasoning, we hope, entirely submissive to, and guided by, the unerring Spirit. It is this persuasion, indeed, which furnishes us with hope and consolation in our labours, and leads us to anticipate an ample recompense—even "glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace, and goodwill towards men."

In the first place, then, let us glance at the injunctions of Holy Scripture, as to the acquisition and possession of property. There are many passages which bear on this subject, of a general character, and which tend to point out, on the one hand, the virtues of temperance and liberality, and on the other, the vices of excess, and selfishness. But our concern at present is with those more specific directions which teach the *extent* to which self-denial and generosity should be carried. And, such, in our opinion, are the following:—

"He that hath two coats," said John the Baptist to the multitude, when they asked what were the fruits meet for repentance, "He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none, and he that hath meat, let him do likewise." Now, notwithstanding the apparent singularity of the phraseology of this answer, we dare not, with, we fear, the multitude of our Christian brethren, set the injunction aside. We cannot but regard a neglect of *any* single command as not only wrong, but exceedingly dangerous. The light that one single passage sometimes throws upon a number of others, may be the very light which is necessary in order to harmonise an apparent contradiction. In the present instance, we will allow the answer of the Baptist to await the clearer light of that perfect dispensation, of which he was the forerunner. We may remark here, however, that all who desire to know what are "fruits meet for repentance," should be earnestly concerned to apprehend this command, and reduce it to practice.

"Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven," &c., said He, whose way the Baptist had prepared. And perhaps lest, when astonished at this saying, men should misunderstand it, on another occasion our Lord varied the form of expression. And St. Luke, therefore, records what is manifestly the same injunction, as follows:—"Sell that ye have, (that *treasure* ye have) and give alms, provide for yourselves bags which wax not old, a *treasure* in the heavens that faileth not," &c. Now, by a comparison of these two passages, we learn clearly that "laying up treasure in heaven," means employing such treasure in acts of benevolence; "selling it, and giving alms." But this is something more than merely "not setting our affections" on treasures still retained in our possession. We may also ascertain with certainty the meaning of the term "treasure," as used in these passages. From the connecting verses in St. Luke, we find, that the Almighty declares that man to be a "fool," who, in order to lay up on earth the superfluous produce of his lands, pulled down his barns and built greater, and *there* bestowed his fruits and his goods, or in other words, *his treasures.* And he is censured as a fool, *because* his soul might at once be required of him, and he had no certainty whose those things should be, which he had provided or laid up. The lesson to be learnt from the parable was given as follows:—"So is he," that is *a fool*, that "layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich towards God." Then follows a direction how to avoid such folly: "Sell that *treasure* ye have, and give alms, provide yourselves bags that wax not old;" and thus become, what he who lays up his superfluity on earth cannot be, "rich towards God."

"Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, that when ye fail they may receive you into everlasting habitations," is another of our Lord's commands. The *mammon of unrighteousness* means our worldly wealth, and we are here directed to "make to ourselves friends" of, or with this. But this direction must mean something widely different from the conduct of the generality of modern Christians, who deem it sufficient to employ perhaps a little of their annual income in acts of charity, whilst their property generally is held, either to enable them to live "according to their sphere in society," no matter how expensive that sphere may be, or to be employed in its own augmentation. But, passing some other portions of Scripture, we will now call to our aid a well-known and often-quoted, though we fear, a much neglected passage, in St. Paul's letter to Timothy. In it, we are exhorted to be content without such accumulation of treasures as our Lord had so repeatedly forbidden. "Having food and raiment let us be therewith content,—But they that will be rich, fall into temptation, and a snare." This is generally understood to be quite consistent with fixed desire and persevering effort after the acquisition of riches. It is said that the Apostle means to forbid only *unlawful* desire after wealth. But let us pause a moment. The contentment here enjoined is enjoined on those who have food and raiment. "*Having food and raiment*, let us be therewith *content*:" i. e. let us not desire or seek after more; "for we brought nothing into the world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out." Those who have not food and raiment, then, are not addressed in this command: *they may* desire and endeavour after more, than they now possess. But *unlawful desire* is as wrong in those who have not food and raiment, as in those who have. In another sense, *all* should learn, in *whatsoever* state they are, therewith to be content. The contentment here enjoined, then, on those who "have food and raiment," implies that they do not even desire or wish, much more endeavour, to be rich.

If, then, we are not to desire for ourselves, from time to time, more than food and raiment, what is the duty of those who have more than this? The answer we conceive is plain. Unless they can and will employ it in procuring food and raiment, as they have opportunity, for those who are destitute, or in order to do good in other ways, it is the very "treasure" which they are to sell and give in alms. And here we must introduce, and we do it as a concluding testimony, and as a confirmation of our previous remarks, St. Paul's very explicit definition of the proper extent of a Christian's liberality. What is that extent? What is that portion of our property which we are enjoined, in the commands already considered, to part with? What did the Holy Spirit mean by them? Let us hear his own explanation. "Now I mean not that other men be eased and ye burdened, but by an equality; so that now at this time, your abundance may be a supply for their need, that their abundance also may be a supply for your need; so that there may be equality as it is written, he that had gathered much had nothing over, and he that had gathered little had no lack." Now this sentence, as may be seen by a reference to the chapter from which it is taken, is given by St. Paul as a general definition or principle of the benevolence required by the Gospel. And how consistent is it with that great commandment of the law, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." Manifestly, every thing short of this is short of God's requirements. This is the grand principle which must reign in the heart, and rule the life and conversation of every Christian, who becomes what his Master requires. But we may here give an extract from one of the tracts, to which we directed the attention of our readers in a previous article, as it will explain more fully the intention of the passages we have now glanced at. The Scriptural doctrine as to worldly property is thus defined therein.

"A Christian may, and must, acquire or retain that property and only that, which is required for the accomplishment of the duties specified. Consequently, he may possess such an amount of *capital*, as will enable him, from time to time, in his trade, business, or profession, to provide, 1st, the plain necessaries of life: whatever nature moderately requires, for preserving health and strength; not delicacies, not superfluities; for himself and those of his own house; 2ndly, what will put his children into a capacity of providing, by their diligent labour, these things for themselves; 3rdly, for 'his own' widows, and his sick or destitute relatives; and, 4thly, for him that needeth, as he *hath opportunity;* i. e., when his powers of body and of mind are not already sufficiently occupied by the temporal and spiritual wants of his own household; and when he can do it, without so interfering with the business of others, as to render it difficult for them to support themselves. But woe 'unto them that join house to house, and that lay field to field, (and extend their commerce,) *till there be no place.*'

"A Christian, then, will be justified in taking such forethought, and making such previous provision, as is necessary for those purposes; but all beyond this is clearly and absolutely forbidden. All property beyond this, is that treasure which he is to sell and give in alms, and thus lay up in heaven. Consequently, 1st, he may not provide, either for himself or others, the means either of idleness or luxury. His adorning may not be 'the outward adorning, of wearing of gold, or putting on of (costly) apparel,' and he may not 'fare sumptuously.' Consequently, 2ndly, he may not lay up treasures on earth, and then take his ease, and live in independence. As he is able, he must continue to 'do his own business, and work with his own hands' as commanded, in his avocation, until he return unto the dust. Thus earning 'day by day, his daily bread,' for which indeed, and for which only, he is allowed to pray. Consequently, 3rdly, he may not make a private provision against 'rainy days,' i. e., against the contingencies of the future. On the contrary, and in accordance with the divinely appointed method of meeting such contingencies, the members of the Christian church, who being filled with the Holy Ghost, would be of one heart and of one soul, should mutually and reciprocally assist each other. 'That *your* abundance may be a supply for *their* want, that *their* abundance also may be a supply for *your* want;' and not that each one should retain his abundance till some future calamitous event. Hence, the Scriptures reveal a divinely obligatory method, of escaping the 'deceitfulness of riches,' of depositing all superfluity in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, nor thieves break through and steal, and of securing prompt and generous sympathy in the day of adversity."

We might go on to show that the practice of the Church of Christ, in the first and purest ages of its existence, was in accordance with the duties here defined, but this part of the question must be passed by for the present. We need now only point out the bearing which these principles have upon our Investigation. And we appeal to our Christian brethren, whether the prevailing neglect of such a course of life as is implied by them, must not necessarily destroy the efficiency of Christianity. And, on the other hand, we ask, is there not reason to believe that a return to such a course by the members of the church generally, would bring back to the church its long lost holiness, and unity, and power? Were the members of the church, when once admitted by the saving faith of the Gospel into the light and liberty of the sons of God, to shape their lives, and regulate their pursuits in accordance with these heavenly injunctions of our Lord and his Apostles, what might we not anticipate as the result? The church would become a light to our benighted world; a city set upon a hill, which could not be hid. Holiness, not wealth, would be the criterion of influence. The interests of Christ alone would be regarded. The glory of God, and the good of man, and not temporal aggrandisement, would be the common object of the heaven-born, united band. They would become as "a threefold cord." There would be time and talents, and money in abundance, and the sanctified use of all these valuable gifts of God would secure an abundant and pentecostal effusion of the Holy Ghost. Error, and prejudice, and mistaken authority would be destroyed, and men full of faith, and of the Holy Ghost, and of wisdom, would arise. Improper persons would be removed from offices and employments in the church, and their places would be filled by men after God's own heart. The churches would then be purified; and, walking through an ensnaring world with eyes continually fixed on heavenly possessions, the members thereof would grow rapidly in grace, and in the knowledge and love of God. Christianity, then, would be the business of life, and all would mind, not their own things only, but the things of Christ. Brethren! *this* is the remedy for the inefficiency of modern Christianity. This is the portion of the Christian *machinery*, which is now required to put the whole into vigorous and continued motion. This is that which would give permanence to the zeal and activity of young converts; nay, which would perpetually strengthen and mature these graces. Men would then not only enter, but walk steadily on, to the end of their lives, in the path of pleasantness and peace. This would give a *permanent and perpetually-increasing influence to a revival of religion.* This course of life would enable us, each and every one, to become such characters as God requires, to *be* and *do* all that is required, in order to effectual and acceptable co-operation with the God of all grace, in the accomplishment of his glorious design,—the conversion of the world.

We now offer, in conclusion, some hints as to the *means* of effecting a speedy return to the whole of Gospel requisition. A question is now being asked, on every hand, as to the practicability of such a return, and another, as to the mode of its accomplishment. Our reply to the first question is, that all that *ought* to be done, most assuredly *may* be done. And the following hints will, we hope, serve as a clue for a satisfactory and simple answer to the second.

1st. Then, it is necessary, in order to a return to the whole of "first works," that the nature of those works be fully understood by the judgment, and the obligation of them assented to by the will. We must give up ourselves to the teaching of the Holy Ghost, and allow him to lead us into *all* truth; to teach us what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God. We must do more than this. We must not only allow, but earnestly seek, by the diligent use of every appointed means, this necessary teaching. We must pray without ceasing: pray and never faint. We must search the Scriptures. We must give ourselves to reading. We must be swift to hear; and we must receive, with honest hearts, the words of God's messengers; still proving all things, and holding fast that, and that only, which is good. And when God blesses these various means, and pours his light and truth into our minds: showing us what manner of men we must become, in all holy conversation and godliness, we must bow our souls in absolute and joyful submission to his will. Our heart's language must be, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth." We must not exclaim, when an "exceeding broad" command is given us, "This is a hard saying, who can hear it." No! We must be willing to sacrifice the last and dearest object of our affections, if Christ enjoins it. And there is nothing hazardous or unreasonable in this. To give ourselves a living sacrifice, is but a reasonable service. Nay, it is our highest interest to do it. Godliness is profitable for all things. And the kind and all-wise Comforter, sent down from heaven by him who died that we might live, will not lead us astray, nor yet will he forsake us in the hour of need. No, but he will gently and yet omnipotently guide us, in a course of universal and acceptable obedience, through all the numerous dangers and allurements of this evil world, to heaven. These things then, a knowledge of, and hearty submission to, the entire will of God, both as to our faith and practice, are, in the first place necessary, to a return to the purity and piety of the primitive church of Christ. But,

2ndly. We must not, if we would attain to these, neglect our *present* convictions of duty. We must at once *walk on* in the path of duty as far as, and as soon as ever, we see it convincingly. We must not hesitate and halt because some other parts of the way appear at present indistinct. The path of the just shineth brighter and brighter *unto* the perfect day. We must not neglect one duty because another appears difficult to understand. We must not refuse to do what we see is right under present circumstances, because we cannot tell how we ought to act under other circumstances. We must not neglect *our* duty, because we cannot determine the duty of our neighbour. We must act and live up to our present light; and brighter views and clearer convictions will dawn upon us. Oh! if all the thousands of our friends will from this moment use the light and grace they have, we shall soon become the lights of a benighted world. Let us, each and every one, resolve for himself, Let others do as they will, I will be, from this time, my Redeemer's altogether. "For to him that hath shall be given, but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath." He that uses that measure of grace which is given to every man to profit withal, to him more copious and constant supplies shall be given; but from him that will not use the low degree of grace he hath; that will bury his one talent until he receives five, from him shall be taken even that which he hath.

3rdly. As we ourselves receive light, and the knowledge of the truth from God, we must use our utmost efforts to communicate it to others. The slumbering church must be awakened before it can return to its first works. There is indeed already an alarm being sounded. In every section of the universal church there is already a shaking of the things that are. But we must endeavour, so far as we see the light, to work together with God, and to give to the minds of men,—men just awaking out of mental sleep, and seeing things "as trees walking," a proper and truth-discovering direction. To this labour at present we must give especial attention. The minds of millions are now unsettled, and receive very easily impressions either of good or evil. Oh! that a flood of pure, entire, undivided, plainly-spoken gospel truth might now, at this critical time, overspread our land. We must do our best, if we cannot do all we would. But *we may do much, if we are willing to do all we can.* We may do much, if we are willing to use our time, and energies, and property as we ought. Especially may we help on the truth by a wide and persevering dissemination of suitable and good tracts and books. It was *the press* that shook the papal throne; and set at liberty those nations that sighed for freedom. There is reason to believe that the reformation was, to an extent that is by no means generally known, brought about *by the wide dissemination of little tracts.* We call the especial attention of our friends to this efficient means of promoting truth. By its adoption we may indeed "sow beside all waters." And this is a blessed employment; nay, it is an imperative duty. "In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand, for thou knowest not which shall prosper, whether this or that; or whether they shall be, both alike, good." Let us then, whilst we use all other means to scatter the seeds of truth around us, remember especially, and use diligently, that most efficient and easy means, *the wide distribution, both by way of loan and gift, of tracts,* and even larger works. We hope to furnish these to our friends, at exceedingly low prices. Some are now ready, for which see the Cover of this Magazine.

4thly. If we would see better days, we must exercise and exhibit a truly *catholic* spirit and conversation. We must prepare ourselves to bear with much more than hitherto we have been able to bear. We must endure with calmness, ill-usage and reproach. We must never be overcome of evil, nay, we must overcome evil with good. We must "stoop to conquer." We must each become the servant of all; and by returning good for evil, heap coals of melting, softening, love-enkindling fire, on the heads of all our enemies. Neither must we be offended at, or estranged from, a brother that differs from us in opinion. If one of the inspired Apostles could preach with power and with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, so that thousands were converted by his ministrations, and still be so mistaken in opinion as to imagine that the Gospel was not intended for the Gentiles, but only for the Jews; shall we dare to reject from our communion, a Christian brother that differs from us in the most trifling matters? No! we must allow far more in this respect than we have been accustomed to do. We must remember that we ourselves are still *learners.* And who are we, that we should "judge another man's servant? To his own master he standeth or falleth, yea, he shall be holden up, for God is able to make him stand." We must at once become one in affection, and exhibit our affection by Christian communion with each, and by working *together* in our master's service; but we must patiently and charitably wait for union in opinion, by gradual and slower steps. We shall at last, however, attain agreement in this respect also, so far as it is necessary; but, after all, perhaps there will be some differences remaining, so long as we remain where we can only "know in part." Still, however, these will not be *evils;* for they will call into exercise, and convince us more deeply than any other circumstance could do, of the value, the blessedness, the power of heaven-born charity.

5thly, and lastly. It is necessary, in order to a return to first works, that we secure a primitive, pentecostal effusion of the Holy Ghost: that we be plenteously endued with power from on high. We *must* secure this. This, and this only, will enable us to attend to all those other particulars which are indispensable to the church's reformation, and restoration to its long-lost holiness, and union, and power. And we *may* secure this, if we are anxious to do so. We do believe, our heart feels assured, that in accordance with his promises, God, at this very time, is anxiously waiting to fill us all with his Holy Spirit: to pour great and all-sufficient grace upon us all. When, therefore, we consider in connection, the absolute necessity of acquiring primitive *power*, in order to the performance of primitive works, and the certainty afforded us in the Scriptures, that we may acquire that power, this matter assumes an overwhelming importance, and we intensely desire to see our brethren, in every place, and in all appointed ways, uniting in special "prayer and supplication," for the pentecostal effusion of the Holy Ghost. It will impart to all our movements and efforts an energetic, and heavenly, and resistless influence. It is the *propelling power* which, and which alone, can move the Christian machinery.

Looking at the subject in this light, we must declare our unfeigned gratitude to the Almighty, for those encouraging indications which we are now privileged to witness. A wide and rapidly-extending inquiry after the whole truth of the Gospel is taking place. Nay, more, multitudes are receiving the truth in the love thereof. Conviction is succeeding sincere inquiry; and already many are "doing the first works." Thousands are desirous to be all that God would have them to be; and that the churches of which they form a part should assume a scriptural, holy, and heavenly character. And in addition to all these refreshing and delightful circumstances, we feel the force of a very peculiarly applicable declaration of Holy Scripture. We will put it in italics and capitals: we will give it especial prominence, in order that our Christian brethren also may see and feel its force. "*Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Zion:* FOR THE TIME TO FAVOUR HER, YEA, THE SET TIME IS COME; FOR THY SERVANTS TAKE PLEASURE IN HER STONES, AND FAVOUR THE DUST THEREOF. *So shall the heathen fear the name of the Lord; and all the kings of the earth thy glory.*"—Ps. cii. 13 to 15. Brethren, let us lay firm, unwavering hold on such promises as these: let us come boldly to the throne of the heavenly grace: let us "ask in faith, nothing doubting:" let us *make ourselves sure* that God will hear our prayers: and he will hear, and he will answer too. He will teach us his perfect will. He will make us all "willing in the day of his power" to do all that he requires. He will enable us to make a diligent use of the light and grace we have, and he will increase these within us more and more unto the perfect day. He will help us to labour for him, and crown our efforts in his cause with abundant, and, perhaps, utterly unhoped for success. He will enable us to vanquish, by firm and constant meekness, our most decided and most mistaken opponents. He will fill the church with all his fulness; and his salvation shall once more go forth therefrom as brightness: as a lamp that burneth.

Brethren! let us at once, and once for all, and as we have never yet done, give ourselves to God, and then let us give him *all we have.* This is *the way;* THE ONLY WAY to hasten, and usher in the universal reign of righteousness, and peace, and joy; "and THIS WE WILL DO, IF GOD PERMIT."

ANECDOTES.

A MINISTER.

A SCOFFER was once introduced to a minister in the following manner: "This is Mr. ——, an acquaintance of mine; I am sorry to add, though young and healthy, he never attends public worship." "I am almost tempted to hope," replied the minister, "that you are bearing false witness against your neighbour." "By no means," said the infidel, "for I always spend the Sunday in settling accounts." The minister immediately replied, "You will find, sir, that the day of judgment will be spent in exactly the same manner."

SWEARING.

As a minister was on his way from one town to another, for several miles his ears were assailed by oaths too awful to mention: how to stop the swearing he was at a loss to know: at last, having looked to God for direction, he asked the gentlemen if they would grant a stranger a particular favour. They all agreed that, if it were in their power, they would grant it. Being assured that it was in their power, the minister begged that what he was going to say to them would not give offence. They all agreed that whatever he said should not. Seeing their curiosity excited, he mildly told them that he was astonished to hear so many oaths uttered, and would esteem it a great favour if they would refrain from them. One of the gentlemen made this reply, "You have acted wisely in making us promise to perform, and also not to be angry; and we, as gentlemen, will endeavour to keep our word. I believe you are correct in disliking swearing; it is a very bad custom, and it is a pity there should be so much of it; for my own part, I am not one who swear as some do." The minister, glad to hear this confession, said that he was unacquainted with the meaning of some common oaths, but would briefly explain the meaning of some words he heard repeated by them, and they would be better able to judge as to their propriety; accordingly he went over word by word, explaining each, when they all agreed they were wrong in using them, and promised to refrain in future. It is gratifying to know that they did as they said. One loquacious gentleman, who had interlarded almost every sentence with oaths, now sat silent; even the coachman ceased to add an oath in calling to his horses. The conversation turned upon useful subjects, and the minister inwardly thanked God for the word spoken in season. One of their friends, who was riding inside, wishing to enjoy the fine evening breeze, proposed getting on the outside, and the minister offered to give him his place. "No, no," cried more than one, "you must not leave us; you must remain, for your company is highly necessary." It is pleasing to say, that for nearly forty miles, except once, they kept to their promise: and when he left the coach, they thanked him for his company, and hoped they should not forget his advice. How important is it to use prudence with zeal! Surely private individuals, as well as public teachers, when travelling, or engaged in the occupations of the day, should try to be useful.

A METHODIST.

A PLAIN, honest, straight-forward Christian, on being called by a profligate worldling, "a methodist," quietly replied, "Sir, whether you are aware of it, or not, you are equally a methodist with myself." "How?—how?" inquired the scoffer, with many oaths. "Pray be calm; there are but two methods, the method of salvation and the method of damnation; in one of these you certainly are; in which, I leave you to decide." The scoffer answered not a word.

BARON SMITH.

Some years ago, a man was tried at Cambridge, for a robbery committed on an aged lady in her own house. The judge was Baron Smith, who maintained a consistent profession of religion. He asked the lady if the prisoner at the bar was the person who robbed her? "Truly, my lord," said she, "I cannot positively say it was he, for it was rather dark when I was robbed; so dark that I could hardly discern the features of his face." "Where were you when he robbed you?" "I was in a closet that joins to my bedchamber, and he had got into my house while my servant had gone out on an errand." "What day of the week was it?" "It was the Lord's Day evening, my lord." "How had you been employed when he robbed you?" "My lord, I am a protestant dissenter; I had been at the meeting that day, and had retired into my closet in the evening for prayer and meditation on what I had been hearing through the day." When she uttered these words, the court, which was crowded with some hundreds of persons, including many young men, rung with a peal of loud laughter. The judge looked round the court as one astonished, and with a decent solemnity laid his hands upon the bench, as if going to rise, and, with great emotion of feeling, spoke to the following effect:—"Where am I? Am I in the place of one of the universities of this kingdom, where it is to be supposed that young gentlemen are educated in the principles of religion, as well as in all useful learning? and can such persons laugh in so improper a manner on hearing an aged Christian relate that she retired into her closet on a Lord's Day evening for prayer and meditation! Blush, and be ashamed, all of you, if you are capable of it, as well you may." And then turning to the lady, he said, "Don't be discouraged, madam, by this piece of rude and unmannerly, as well as irreligious conduct; you have no reason to be ashamed of what you have on this occasion, and in this public manner said. It adds dignity to your character, and shame belongs to them who would expose it to ridicule."

SPIRITUALITY OF MIND.

What is *meant* by being spiritually minded? This is the first question that demands our attention; and to this question we shall endeavour to give a distinct, intelligible reply.

1. In order to be spiritually-minded, it is not necessary that we retire from secular engagements, and seclude ourselves from human society. This was generally believed to be necessary in the darker periods of church history. At one time it was deemed impossible for any man to attain to any considerable degree of moral excellence or spiritual perfection, without shutting up himself in a cloister or a cell. Numbers under the influence of this prevailing sentiment, retired into caves and deserts; and there, far from the busy walks of life, spent their days in ceaseless meditation, and their nights in prayer. Subsisting on the very coarsest food, depriving themselves of all rest but what was absolutely essential to the preservation of their lives, they sought, by deep reflection, constant study, and almost unintermitting acts of worship, to secure a perfect abstraction of mind from all earthly solicitudes and thoughts, and to attain a close and mystic union with the great source of being.

But they were mistaken. Many of them were doubtless good men, and were influenced by a desire to please God. But they mistook the nature of that spirituality which the Gospel requires, and which is the highest glory and happiness of man. This is a spirituality perfectly compatible with every social relationship that God has established, and with the performance of every duty imposed by such relationship. While the soul thus spiritually-minded seeks the most perfect union with the Divine Being, it remembers that it is already united to many human beings by close and tender ties. While it delights in heavenly contemplation, it neglects no secular engagement by which the glory of God and the happiness of mankind may be promoted. Its chief end, and its highest enjoyment, is to glorify God; but it seeks, as the most effectual means of securing this result, to spread the blessings of life and salvation amongst the fallen sons of men. Closet exercises are its delight; but it does not, in order to engage in these, neglect the duties of the family, the counting house, or the workshop; nor does it shrink from the less inviting duties of instructing the ignorant, warning the vicious, visiting the chambers of affliction, and the cellars of the poor and destitute.

The spirituality of the Gospel is in harmony with all our domestic arrangements and social tendencies. It does not require us to live in the desert, or to confine ourselves in a cell; and its author prayed, *not* that we might be taken out of the world, but that we might be kept from the evil that is in the world. By the diligent cultivation of every social virtue, and the faithful fulfilment of every duty we owe to ourselves and our fellow-creatures, as well as to our God, the Gospel calls us to shine as lights of the world; and as the salt of the earth, to pervade the whole mass of society with the purifying influence of our tempers and behaviour. The spirituality which the Gospel requires, does not take the mother from her domestic toils, nor does it call the father from pursuing his daily avocation: it leaves each in the sphere in which Providence has placed them; but amid all the various and multiplied engagements of life, it leads them to realize what the poet so beautifully expresses;

> "Careless through outward things I go,
> From all distraction free;
> My hands are but engaged below,
> My heart is still with thee."

Neither does the spirituality required by the Gospel unfit us for the pleasures of life. It teaches us to estimate them according to their real value, it forbids us to seek them as our chief good, it disposes us to sacrifice them when that is necessary to the attainment of higher objects, and it prepares us to relinquish them, at the call of Providence, without a murmur; but it does not forbid us moderately and gratefully to enjoy them, when that can be done without neglecting higher duties, or sacrificing more worthy and important objects. We cannot desire to be more spiritually-minded than the Saviour; but we do not discover in him any thing like the ascetic, mortified habits, that some have deemed requisite to spirituality of mind. To do the will of his Father, and to benefit mankind, he was disposed to deny himself of every thing; and he did really sacrifice every thing, life itself not excepted. But he wore no sackcloth; he had no set times for fasting; he inflicted on himself no penances; nor did he teach his disciples to differ from himself in these respects. He partook of the social repast; he cheerfully conversed with his disciples; and though there was nothing in his mode of life like self-indulgence, still he did not despise the bounties of Providence, nor imitate the self-imposed austerities of the Scribes and Pharisees. And as *he* was, so should *we* be in this world. If we find that any particular kind of food, or any thing in our mode of life, inflames our passions, or adds strength to our animal appetites, then the spirituality which the Gospel requires would lead us to abstain from that particular kind of food, or to lay aside that particular in our mode of life. If living on coarser fare will enable us to minister to the temporal or spiritual necessities of those around us, the spirituality of the Gospel will dispose us thus to live. For objects like these, and within such limits as these, a spiritually-minded man will deny himself of any indulgence; but he sees nothing excellent, or meritorious, or praiseworthy in imposing hardships and privations on himself for their own sake. So far as he can partake of the pleasures which a gracious Providence has placed at his command, without injuring his soul, impairing his influence, or diminishing his means of doing good, he partakes of those pleasures with gratitude to him from whose bounty they proceed.

Neither does spirituality of mind consist in those occasional exercises of the mind on spiritual things which any man may perform, whose general habits and dispositions are earthly and sensual. Spiritual subjects are so important, and the bearing that they have on our highest interests is so obvious, that they sometimes force themselves on the attention of the most carnal and thoughtless. How often do we see a careless, trifling, worldly character, seized with a fit of seriousness under some rousing discourse, or in consequence of some impressive alarming incident? And under the influence of impressions thus produced, he will think for a while of spiritual subjects; he will engage in spiritual exercises; he will read and pray, and attend social religious meetings, and excite the hope in many a mind that he is about to become a thoroughly decided, devoted, spiritual man. But alas! self, and sense, and time retain their grasp on his affections; the momentary regard he renders to God, and his soul, and eternity, is but a tribute that he pays to his fears, for the purpose of allaying them, that he may again, with all his might, devote himself to earthly, sensual pursuits. "His goodness is as the morning cloud, and as the early dew, it passeth away." Let not such suppose for a moment that they are spiritually-minded. Spirituality of mind is a fixed habit, a settled, permanent disposition of soul. It bears no more resemblance to these fitful exercises, than does a deep, ever flowing, never failing stream, to a fleeting summer's shower.

Neither does spirituality of mind consist in the ability to talk freely and fluently of spiritual things. If a man be able to speak with clearness, and warmth, and liberty on spiritual subjects; if he be able with fluency and fervour to pray, and especially if he be able to talk and pray so as to affect men's minds, and make them weep, he is regarded at once, by many, as a truly pious man; and though there be no evidences of piety in his conduct; though his conduct should seem to indicate a fearful lack of religious principle, still there are numbers who feel as if it were impossible for a man to talk and pray as he does, without being an eminently religious man. Just as if it were impossible for the tongue to utter what the heart denies; just as though it were impossible to draw nigh to God with our lips, while our hearts are far from him; just as though it were impossible to cry Lord, Lord, and neglect to do the will of our Father who is in heaven. Spirituality of mind consists not in any thing like this. A spiritual man may be able to converse freely of spiritual things, or he may not; he may be able to pray in public with fluency and apparent fervour, or he may not; and whether he is or not, his spirituality consists not in these things, nor are these things to be regarded as certain evidences of it. So far from this, there is often, in connection with deep-toned spirituality of mind, a feeling of self-diffidence and abasement, that shrinks from public exercises, rather than delights in them; that proves its affection for the Supreme, by the extent of its services, and the amount of its sacrifices, rather than by the loudness of its professions. It always bears in mind that solemn admonition of the Apostle, "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, and as a tinkling cymbal."

But the question returns, in what does true spirituality of mind consist? How may it be distinguished? To this question we reply, true spirituality of mind consists in a due, habitual, practical regard to spiritual things. Man is composed of two parts, that connect him with two worlds. He has a body taken from the dust, and intended to lie down in the dust again. This body has appetites, and organs, and faculties peculiar to itself. By the body man is connected with this world. In this world are to be found the objects by which its appetites may be gratified, in which its organs are to be exercised, and in the pursuit of which its various faculties are to be unfolded. By means of the body, with its senses of sight and hearing, of smell and taste and feeling, we are connected with this whole visible creation. And it is impossible to avoid being influenced more or less by the objects that we behold, the sounds to which we listen, the longings that we feel, and the opportunities that offer themselves of satisfying the cravings of our animal appetites. And when we consider that our fleshly propensities begin to exert their power as soon as we begin to live; that our bodily faculties are developed to a considerable extent before the mind unfolds itself at all; that the objects with which the body is more intimately connected are all of them visible to the eye, or audible to the ear, or sensible to the touch, while the objects with which the mind is conversant are more distinct and subtile and refined: and when we consider in connexion with all this, the derangement of our powers, that has resulted from the fall,—the subordination of the higher to the lower faculties of the mind, and the subjection of the mind itself to fleshly appetites and earthly considerations that has become natural to man; when we consider these things I say, we shall not wonder that this world exerts so vast and uncontrolled an influence on the minds of most. But man has a *mind* as well as a body; there is an *invisible* as well as a visible world;—a world of spirits as well as the world of physical forms and substances that we behold around us.

Spirituality of mind consists in rendering to the soul and its interests, that first and principal attention which their worth and importance so plainly require. It consists in such a daily, constant regard to the invisible world as leads us to view every thing else as of trifling moment when compared with its vast concerns; as leads us to make the pursuit and enjoyment of all earthly good subservient to the culture of our highest faculties, and the promotion of our spiritual and eternal interests. The Apostle describes it where he says, "while we look, not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen, for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal."

A spiritually-minded man has an habitual, deep impression of the reality and importance of spiritual objects. His knowledge of these objects is not of that general, loose, indeterminate character, which makes no distinct impression on the mind, and exerts no influence on the life. His faith in their existence is not so feeble and ill-founded as that which generally prevails; a faith that awakens no desires, forms no purposes, calls forth no resolute, diligent, self-denying efforts. No, his acquaintance with spiritual objects is sufficiently close and intimate to make clear, distinct, abiding impressions on his mind; his faith in their existence is so strong that it enkindles in his soul ardent aspirations, and awakens in his breast pure and generous emotions; it leads him solemnly to resolve on the utmost possible improvement of all his spiritual powers, as well as faithfully and diligently to fulfill this resolution. With him the idea of God is a living, powerful reality. God is unseen, 'tis true; visible objects and earthly solicitudes tend to crowd him out of his recollection, and banish him from his thoughts; but he sees the proofs of the divine existence so plainly written both on the outward creation and on his own spiritual nature; he is so familiar with God's character as revealed in the Scriptures, and that character appears to him so lovely and so glorious, that with him there is no truth so real, so interesting, and so important, as the existence and the presence of the first Great Cause of all. He perceives traces of his Creator's wisdom and power and love in every object on which he casts his eyes, and in every sound that strikes his ear. The sun that shines by day, and the moon that sheds her soft and silver beams upon the earth by night; the variegated landscape and the murmuring stream; the majestic mountain and the quiet, lovely dale; the raging tempest and the soft refreshing breeze; the rigours of winter and the smiles of summer; the verdure and freshness of the opening spring, and the teeming plenty of autumn; all, all proclaim to him the presence of his Father and his God. And when he turns from nature to revelation; when he reads the character of the Great Supreme, on the sacred page of inspiration; when he sees that character unfolded in all its tenderness and loveliness in the conduct of his beloved Son, "Jesus of Nazareth, who went about doing good;" when he sees the God of heaven and earth approving himself in every respect the friend and benefactor of mankind; when he contemplates his unsullied purity, his unbending righteousness, his long forbearance, his overflowing, boundless love; when he beholds these truths not recorded in laboured descriptions and established by abstract, metaphysical reasonings, but practically illustrated, made visible and palpable as it were, in the person and character and work of Christ; he feels that the idea of God is not a phantom of the imagination, or a cold inoperative article in a dull and lifeless creed; he feels that it is a living warm reality; he cherishes it in his mind as the model of all true virtue and greatness, and as the encouragement and defence of all virtuous principle, of all holy feeling, and of all righteous conduct. It becomes with him THE GREAT THOUGHT to which all other thoughts must be conformed; and by which all the feelings of his heart, and all the actions of his life, must be regulated and controlled. In the emphatic language of Revelation, he sees God; he walks with God; he dwells in God; and God dwells in him. He regards God as the infinite, omnipresent, all pervading Intelligence: and however deep the solitude may be in which he dwells, he feels that he is not alone, for God is with him; however great the crowd in which he moves, he feels the presence of the Invisible God more distinctly than the presence of any earthly, visible being. He walks by faith and not by sight; and so powerful is this principle, that when it has obtained full ascendency in the soul, it avails itself of visible objects and earthly affairs to raise the mind to God, instead of allowing these things to separate the thoughts and affections from God. The idea of God is with faith the all-pervading thought, and it makes use of all the occurrences and relations of life to give this thought distinctness and energy and effect. Is the spiritual man a Father? This relation reminds him of his Father who is in heaven; and all the paternal feelings and solicitudes that fill his breast, only aid him in understanding and realizing the paternal character of God. Is he a child? The reverence and obedience he cheerfully renders to his earthly parents, assists him in forming just conceptions of that profound homage, that devoted, universal obedience which is due to the Great Parent of the universe. Does he rise from his slumbers at the commencement of the day? His returning consciousness at once reminds him of the great Being from whom his life proceeds, and on whom his life depends. Does he retire to rest at night? He almost involuntarily thinks of the kind, superintending Providence that watches over his sleeping hours; he remembers with gratitude and joy that "He who keepeth Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps." Does the sun of prosperity shine upon his path and illuminate his footsteps? In that prosperity he sees the expression of God's unbounded love. Does the dark cloud of adversity hover around him, and at last settle on his abode? Through that dark cloud he is still enabled to see the brightness of his Father's countenance, and in composure and resignation he says, Good is the will of the Lord. Whether the objects presented to his view be of a pleasing or a painful character; whether the course of events be prosperous or adverse, the truly spiritual man makes use of all as a ladder on which to ascend to God. The thought of God is his most cherished, dear, and valued thought; and so distinct are his apprehensions of God's character, and so firm and unshaken his confidence in God's being and presence, that those fine lines of the poet often exactly describe the state of his mind.

"Faith lends its realizing light,
The clouds disperse, the shadows fly;
The Invisible appears in sight,
And God is seen by mortal eye!"

A spiritual man thinks freely and spontaneously and habitually of spiritual things. I do not mean that when eyes and hands and thoughts are all necessarily and properly engaged with secular matters, that at the same time he thinks of other things. This is contrary to the laws of our mental constitution, and is, in fact, an impossibility. What I mean is this: that in those seasons of leisure when a man may think of this object or of that, when the direction of a man's thoughts is determined by the character he sustains: in those moments when the drunkard thinks of his cups, and the ambitious man of his honours, and the covetous man of his gold, and the licentious man of his unhallowed pleasures: then, when we all think of that which we most love, and in which we feel most deeply interested; then, the spiritual man thinks of God, of Christ, of holiness, of usefulness, of eternity, of heaven. As naturally and freely as we think of a much loved, absent friend, does the spiritual man think of God. As naturally and spontaneously as our thoughts fly homeward when we have been long absent from home, do the thoughts of the spiritual man ascend to his home in heaven. Just as an employment in which we feel deeply interested occupies our thoughts during our leisure moments, so does the spiritual man think of God's service as the great business of his life. The architect forms his plans, the merchant counts his stores, the man of science ponders over the results of his experiments, and the mathematician tries his problems, when none of them appear to be engaged with such affairs. So is it with the spiritual man. He meditates on the sad condition of a guilty world; he wonders what can be done for its salvation; he lays his plans and watches their operation, he inwardly sighs and prays for their success, when he does not appear to others to be engaged with matters of this description at all. He is spiritually-minded, and his thoughts, whether voluntary or involuntary, still run on spiritual things. His citizenship is in heaven; his affections are there; and his thoughts and conversation are there also.

This a point of great importance; it is a test whereby we may try our character; and it behoves each of my readers seriously to ask himself—What is the character of those thoughts which I voluntarily cherish, or which rise up spontaneously in my mind? Are they of the earth, earthy? When my mind is released from necessary attention to worldly things, whether do my thoughts fly? On what objects do they fix themselves? Do they still grovel on the earth? Or do they rise to heaven? Do they fly away to some scene of unhallowed, forbidden pleasure? Or do they dwell on the character of God, the relations he sustains to me, the requirements of his word, and the happiness of dwelling with him for ever? We think of what we love the most; and depend upon it, if we think easily, naturally, habitually, of earthly things; and if it is but seldom and with difficulty that we think of spiritual things;—if we have to do violence to ourselves, as it were, to fix our thoughts on spiritual subjects, we have no reason to regard ourselves as spiritually-minded, but every reason to fear that the flesh has dominion over us, *that we are carnal and sold under sin.*

A truly spiritual man regulates all his judgments of good and evil, of gain and loss, by *spiritual* considerations. Has he to choose a situation for himself? He does not choose that in which he may most rapidly grow rich, or in which he may make the most fashionable imposing appearance; but that in which he will have the best opportunities of cultivating his highest faculties, of maintaining close and intimate communion with God, and of doing good to the bodies and souls of his fellowmen. Has he to choose an employment for his child? He acts on the same principles. He regards the soul more than the body; eternity more than time. Two situations offer. In one of these the youth will have every facility for making a fortune, and rising to worldly eminence and distinction; but in order to this he must be placed under an ungodly master, live in an ungodly family, conform to ungodly customs, and be surrounded in other respects by ungodly, irreligious influences. In the other situation he is not so likely to become a wealthy man, or to rise to so distinguished a position in civil society; but then he will have the unspeakable advantage of living with a pious master, in a pious family, surrounded with pious influences. He will have every thing to strengthen his religious principles, and be exposed to comparatively few temptations to evil. Which of these situations does the spiritual man choose for his son? Does he sell the soul of his child for gain? Does he place his son where he is most likely to get on in the world, regardless of what becomes of his undying spirit? Or does he regard eternity more than time? The spiritual more than the temporal interests of his son? I answer, in the words of John Wesley, He would rather his son were a poor man on earth and a saint in Heaven, than a rich man on earth and a lost spirit in hell! Does he choose a partner for life? He does not pay supreme nor even *principal* regard to beauty, rank, fortune, or fashionable accomplishments. No; he regards himself as a servant of God, and a candidate for eternity; and he selects for a partner one whose piety, prudence, and amiable dispositions are likely to assist him in serving God, and making his calling and election sure. Whatever be the case in which he has to choose and to decide, he regulates his choice, and controuls his decision, by spiritual and eternal, and not by carnal, temporal considerations.

Reader, how is it with thee in this respect? In the innumerable cases which are continually occurring, in which thou hast to choose between this course and that, by what principles and motives dost thou govern thy choice? Is it the body or the soul, time or eternity, heaven or earth, duty or interest, God or man, that is the object of thy supreme regard? Examine thyself on this point, and remember that the examination will be renewed before another tribunal at another day. If thou art spiritually-minded the body habitually yields to the soul, time to eternity, earth to heaven, interest to duty, man to God. But if thy conduct be the reverse of this; if thou art accustomed to sacrifice the well-being of thy soul to the gratification of thy bodily propensities; if eternity is forgotten or kept out of sight, in thy extreme anxiety for temporal good; if earthly considerations move thee more than heavenly: if false, limited notions, of interest can prevail on thee to neglect thy duty; if to please the creature thou canst sin against thy great Creator, thou hast reason to tremble for thy sad condition; whoever may be spiritually-minded, thou canst lay no claim to such a character; thy character is imprinted on thy brow, and unless it be changed in time, it will cover thee with disgrace, and involve thee in ruin throughout eternity. "For to be carnally-minded is death, but to be spiritually-minded is life and peace."

(To be continued.)

"THE WORDS OF THE WISE."

A Christian on his way to church, one Sabbath morning, was met by an infidel, who asked him where he was going to. "I am going to church, to worship God," was the answer. "O, and *you* are one of those that believe there is a God are you? Pray what is your God like? Is he a great God, or a little God?" "He is so great that the heaven of heavens cannot contain him," said the Christian, "and (laying his hand upon his breast) so little as to dwell *here*, within my heart." A word spoken in season, how good it is.

JOSEPH BRADFORD.

"Joseph," said Mr. Wesley one day, to Bradford, who at that time was his travelling companion, "take the letters to the post."

BRAD.—"I will take them after preaching, Sir."

WES.—"Take them *now* Joseph."

B.—"I wish to hear you preach, Sir; and there will be sufficient time for the post after service."

W.—"I insist upon you going now, Joseph."

B.—"I will not go at present."

W.—"You won't?"

B.—"No, Sir."

W.—"Then, you and I must part."

B.—"Very good, Sir."

The good men slept over it. Both were early risers. At four o'clock the next morning, the refractory "helper" was accosted with "Joseph have you considered what I said—that we must part?"

B.—"Yes, Sir."

W.—"And must we part?"

B.—"Please yourself, Sir."

W.—Will you ask my pardon, Joseph?"

B—"No, Sir."

W.—"You won't?"

B.—"No, Sir."

W.—"Then I will ask *yours*, Joseph."

Poor Joseph was instantly melted; smitten as the rock by the hand of Moses, and forth gushed the tears, like water from the rock. He had a tender soul. He would have sacrificed health, and even life, for Mr. Wesley, but he would never bend, except in meekness.

A NOBLE ANSWER.

"You don't know *that!* what do you know?" said a young man in York, to the Rev. Jos. E., who had just professed his ignorance of some fact connected with astronomy. The aged and venerable man, in an affectionate and yet truly dignified tone, merely replied, "I know HIM, WHOM TO KNOW IS LIFE ETERNAL."

"LAYING UP FOR THEMSELVES IN STORE."—TIM. vi. 19.

The Babylonish Talmud relates an illustrative story of one King Munzab, who distributed his father's *treasures* to the poor, which brought to him his brethren and friends complaining of his conduct. He replied to them, "My fathers treasured up below, I treasure up above. My fathers treasured up for this world, I treasure up for the world to come." How superior the faith of King Munzab to that of most Christians in modern ages!

A COTTAGER.

"WELL, Hodge," said a smart-looking Londoner to a plain cottager, who was on his way home from church, "so you are trudging home, after taking the benefit of the fine balmy breezes in the country this morning." "Sir," said the man, "I have not been strolling about this sacred morning, wasting my time in idleness and neglect of religion; but I have been at the house of God, to worship him, and to hear his preached word." "Ah! what then, you are one of those simpletons, that, in these country places, are weak enough to believe the Bible. Believe me, my man, that book is nothing but a pack of nonsense; and none but weak and ignorant people now think it true." "Well, Mr. Stranger, but do you know, weak and ignorant as we country people are, we like to have two strings to our bow." "Two strings to your bow! what do you mean by that?" "Why, sir, I mean, that to believe the Bible, and act up to it, is like having two strings to one's bow; for, if it is not true, I shall be the better man for living according to it; and so it will be for my good in this life—that is one string: and if it should be true, it will be better for me in the next life—that is another string; and a pretty strong one it is. But, sir, if you disbelieve the Bible, and on that account do not live as it requires, you have not one string to your bow. And oh, if its tremendous threats prove true, O think! what, then, sir, will become of you?" This plain appeal silenced the unbeliever, and made him feel, it is hoped, that he was not quite so wise as he had supposed.

THE REPROACH OF CHRIST,

Or a few words to one who is purposing to be a thorough Christian, and an Evangelical Reformer.

You must not expect to escape reproach. It has been the lot of God's faithful people in all ages to be reproached, and it has especially been the lot of those who have been called to take a more active part than others in reforming errors and abuses.

The Redeemer teaches us that this was the case with the prophets that preceded him, in his Sermon on he Mount. "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad, for *so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.*" The history of the prophets and reformers of ancient times, is in agreement with the statement of the Saviour.

Moses was greatly tried in this way. Though he was armed with the power of God,—though he wrought such miracles as had never been wrought on earth before; yet the children of Israel, for whose deliverance and salvation he was employed by God, appear to have reviled him, or murmured against him at almost every step he took. And before the times of Moses, Enoch, the seventh from Adam, a teacher of truth and righteousness, appears to have been subject to similar treatment from the sinners and apostates of *his* times: hence Jude, in his Epistle, represents him as foretelling divine judgments against the wicked, especially on account of the hard and cruel speeches which they impiously uttered. Reproach was the lot of Elijah. When he saw the corruptions which prevailed among the people, he could not be silent; his heart burned with zeal for the honour of God and of religion, and he lifted up his voice like a trumpet, and showed the people their transgressions. He not only cried out against the sins of the multitude; he carried his reproofs into the palace, and warned the guilty monarch himself of the coming judgments of God. He was accordingly denounced as a bold bad man; he was represented as the enemy of the King, and as the troubler of Israel; and attempts were made to take away his life.

And the lot of Elijah was the lot of the prophets generally. There are intimations in the prophecies of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel, that both they and those who hearkened to the word of the Lord which was preached by them, were the objects of general scorn and derision. The prophet Isaiah, in the twenty-ninth chapter, speaks of some of the great ones who lived in "the city where David dwelt," who scorned the prophets of the Lord, and watched for opportunities to do them harm; who made a man an offender for a word, and laid a snare for him that reproved in the gate. And in the fifty-first chapter he addresses the pious and faithful ones of his days as follows: "Hearken unto me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law; fear ye not the reproaches of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings. For the moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool; but my righteousness shall be for ever, and my salvation from generation to generation." It was the same with Jeremiah. "For thy sake," saith he, in an address to God, —"For thy sake I have suffered rebuke." And on another occasion he says, "The word of the Lord was made a reproach unto me, and a derision daily. I heard the defaming of many, fear on every side. Report, say they, and we will report. All my familiars watched for my halting, saying, Peradventure he will be enticed and we shall prevail against him, and we shall have our revenge on him." The priests were so enraged at his faithfulness, that they declared him worthy of death; xxvi. 11, and the princes also demanded his death, "for he weakeneth the hands of the men of all war," said they, "and the hands of the people, in speaking such words unto them; and he seeketh not the welfare of this people, but their hurt. Then they took Jeremiah, and cast him into the dungeon. And in the dungeon there was no water, but mire; so Jeremiah sunk in the mire."

It was the lot of the Psalmist. "I am a reproach of men," saith he, "and despised of the people. All that see me laugh me to scorn; they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, he trusted on the Lord, that he would deliver him: let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him. Many bulls have compassed me, strong bulls of Bashan have beset me round. They gaped upon me with their mouth, as a ravening bear and a roaring lion." Pslam xxii.—"False witnesses" on another occasion he says, "did rise up; they laid to my charge things which I knew not. They rewarded me evil for good to the spoiling of my soul. In mine adversity they rejoiced, and gathered themselves together: yea, the abjects gathered themselves together against me, and I knew it not; they did tear [my reputation,] and ceased not; with hypocritical mockers in feasts, they gnashed upon me with their teeth. They spake not peace; but they devise deceitful matters against them that are quiet in the land. Yea, they opened their mouth wide against me, and said, Aha, Aha, our eye hath seen it." "They that seek my hurt speak mischievous things, and imagine deceits all the day long." "Every day they wrest my words: their thoughts are against me for evil." "For thy sake I have borne reproach: I am become a stranger unto my brethren, and an alien unto my mother's children. The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up; and the reproaches of them that reproached thee, are fallen upon me." The Psalms abound with such passages.

Slanderous reports were sent to the king against Ezra, when he was engaged in rebuilding the city, and Nehemiah was laughed to scorn. The enemies of Nehemiah hired men to draw him to sin, that they might have occasion to reproach him. Ezra iv., Neh. iv. And this was the kind of treatment received by the ancient prophets and reformers generally.

Under the New Testament dispensation, the friends of truth and holiness have suffered still more abundantly from the reproaches of their enemies. The Saviour himself was reproached. They charged him with being a glutton and a drunkard; a friend of publicans and sinners. They represented him as a Sabbath-breaker, as a seditious man, as an infidel, as a blasphemer, as a deceiver of the people, as in league with the devil, as possessed by a devil, and mad. They hired false witnesses to speak against him, and on their testimony they condemned him to be crucified. The Apostles met with similar treatment. The Redeemer had told them it should be so. "Behold I send you forth," said he, "as sheep among wolves. Ye shall be hated of all men," said he, "for my name's sake. The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord. It is enough that the disciple be as his master, and the servant as his lord. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household?" And so it proved. The Apostles had no sooner set fairly to work to publish the Gospel, than the priests and rulers rose against them almost in one mass. Nothing that could be said or done against them was thought too bad for them. They charged Stephen with blasphemy against Moses and against God, against the temple and against the law; and when they were not able to resist the wisdom with which he spake, they gnashed on him with their teeth, stopped their ears, cried out with a loud voice, and ran on him with one accord, and cast him out of the city, and stoned him. The disciples generally were assailed with similar abuse and cruelty. They were reviled and persecuted both by Jews and Gentiles: they were a sect everywhere spoken against. They were represented as the filth and offscouring of all things, and accounted as sheep for the slaughter. They were represented by the Gentiles as Atheists, and as a class of lewd, disorderly, and loathsome characters. They were charged with making men idle, and rendering them unserviceable to the community, and they were actually charged with being the cause, by their impieties, of earthquakes, tempests, floods, and fires, and other public calamities. Nero charged the Christians with setting fire to the city of Rome, when he had kindled the fire himself. They were accused of the grossest sins, such as sacrilege, sedition, treason, incest, murder, with lewdness, in their private meetings, and with their children, and feeding upon their flesh, and with other filthy and abominable deeds without end. Lewd women were hired to declare that they had been Christians, and had witnessed the commission of those filthy abominations in their assemblies ; and the statements of those lewd women were circulated in every direction. In short, though they were the best of the human race, yet *all manner of evil* was spoken of them.

The Reformers of later times have met with similar treatment. Jerome, and Huss, and Wickliffe, and Calvin, and Luther, and Melancthon, and Bucer. Luther was called a child of the devil, a lewd, incontinent, sensualist, a child of Lucifer, and was charged with learning his religion of the devil, and with being killed by the devil. It was published that Bucer had his bowels pulled out, and cast about by the devil. Calvin was stigmatized as a sodomite and sensualist. It was published in a book that Beza died a Papist, when at the same time he was still alive, and lived long after to write a refutation of the calumnies of his enemies. The godly Waldenses were represented as sorcerers and sodomites, as holding many false and damnable opinions, and as assembling together under pretence of religious worship, for the commission of all uncleanness, and abominable incests. Baxter was charged with being a Pelagian, an Arian, a Socinian, a Papist, a Heretic, and a Prince of Heretics. W. Penn was represented as a Papist and a Jesuit, and the slander became so widely spread, and so generally believed, that he could not be seen abroad without danger, and even the members of his own society began to be influenced by the slander at length. The puritans were represented as liars and covetous persons, and as the enemies of the church and state. Wesley and Whitfield were assailed with reproaches on every hand. They were denounced as rebels and heretics, as vile impostors, fanatics, enthusiasts, and madmen. The early Methodists, like the early Christians and the godly Waldenses, were charged with meeting together under pretence of religion, for the vilest purposes, as blowing out the lights in their meetings, and mixing together in all kinds of loathsome and horrible abominations. Alexander Kilhàm was branded as a defamer of Wesley, as an enemy to the altar and the throne, as a follower of Paine, as an equivocator, a liar, a slanderer, a hypocrite, a child of the devil, an enemy of all righteousness, and as a perverter of the right ways of the Lord. Chillingworth, the great advocate of the right of private judgment, and liberty of conscience, was charged with being a Socinian. Hannah Moore also was charged with being a Socinian, and a report was put in circulation that she was already married to Dr. Priestley. In short, I know of none who have distinguished themselves by a strict regard to the truth and to the will of God, who have not been thus reviled : and to expect that you shall escape, if you should tread in their steps, would be great folly. If you break loose from the power of custom, and lay aside the authority of the traditions of the elders,—if you cease to be the servant of men, and become the servant of God alone,—if you take the Gospel for your only creed and law-book, and regulate your sentiments and behaviour by its teachings, without respect to the authority of the Chief Priests and Elders, you will as certainly bring upon yourself a flood of foul abuse, as ever you were born. I say not these things to discourage you, but I wish you to know what you are doing,—I wish you, before you come out against the powers of darkness, properly to count the cost.

Some people imagine that Christian reformers might accomplish their objects without reproach if they were sufficiently prudent.—They are disposed to think that it is the errors and imperfections of reformers that subject them to so much reproach, and that if they were as perfect and as prudent as they ought to be, they might carry on their reforming operations smoothly and peacefully. But this is a great mistake. Christ was prudent enough, and he was free from all faults and imperfections as well, and yet he was reproached. We have reason to believe that the Apostles were very prudent, and that they were very exemplary in their conduct also, yet they were reproached. I am not aware that there was any particular lack of prudence in Luther or Wesley, or that their characters were disfigured by any considerable blemish, and yet they were exceedingly reviled. The truth is, the more perfect and prudent reformers have been, and the more abundant and violent have been the reproaches poured forth against them. It is not the imprudence or imperfections of reformers that bring down reproaches on them, it is their plain and bold declaration of the truth, and their faithful exemplification of it in their own lives. It is their virtue and fidelity that subject them to reproach. Let virtue take what form it may, it will still provoke the wrath of the profligate: and let truth be accompanied with what measures of prudence it may, it will still offend such as are wedded to corrupt interests and institutions: to expect the profligate to be peaceful when they are reproved, and to expect the earthly and selfish to be quiet when their evil interests are endangered, is absolute folly: they will be no such thing. Let virtue take what form it may, it will still call forth reproaches from the ungodly, if it be manifest and decided virtue. This is remarkably proved in the history of the Saviour. The Jews at first went out to be baptized by John in great multitudes, and they regarded him as a prophet of the most High; but when they found how strict and unbending his virtue was, they fell out of love with him, and said he had a devil. When the Saviour made his appearance, all eyes were turned to him, and the whole country round went out to follow him; but when they found what was the nature of his doctrine, and discovered the purity and strictness of his life and precepts, they were soon offended, and reproached him as bitterly as they had reproached John. And what is the more remarkable, John the Baptist and the Saviour were reproached for things which were in manner directly opposed to each other. In other words, John was singular in his dress, and exceedingly abstemious in his living, carrying things to what some would call an extreme, while Jesus in his dress and living conformed to whatever was innocent in the common mode, and yet the Jews were pleased with neither. "John came neither eating nor drinking," says the Saviour to the Jews, "and they say, He hath a devil. The Son of Man came eating nor drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners." Matt. xi. 18, 19. Whether we give men occasion or not, we shall be reproached, if we declare the truth, and by our doctrine and example urge men to a strict conformity with the laws of Christ.

But we have no need to be afraid of reproach. While the facts which I have laid before you prove that, if we are faithful to God, reproach will come upon us; they are calculated also to afford us support and consolation under reproach. They teach us, that when we are reproached for the sake of truth and righteousness, we are in the noblest company. Who would shrink from sharing the lot of God's ancient prophets, or from drinking out of the same cup as Christ and his Apostles? Shall we think it an intolerable hardship to be treated as Wickliffe, and Luther, and Baxter, and Penn, and Wesley, and Whitfield, were treated? The thought of standing in such company ought to inspire us with joy and exultation. We ought rather to regard it as an honour and a blessing, than as a great calamity. Hear what the Redeemer says. "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake: rejoice and be exceeding glad, for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." If the followers of Christ were to rejoice and be exceeding glad when reviled and reproached, because they were thus brought into conformity with the ancient prophets, we ought much more to be glad when *we* are reproached and reviled, for we are by this means brought into conformity with Christ himself. When Peter and John were rebuked for preaching in the name of Christ, they took it for an honour, and rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer in so good a cause. And we ought to be animated by the same spirit. Reproach is honour, and shame is glory, when endured for the sake of truth and righteousness. And it will be seen to be so by and by. The man of God that is covered with abuse to-day, shall shortly be honoured as a martyr, and ranked among the worthies and the wonders of his race. Who are so honoured now, as the men who were formerly most covered with reproaches and abuse? The clouds that for a time hid their glory, have passed away, and now they shine forth bright in all the splendours of eternal light.

And if we should never receive honour on earth, we shall receive it in heaven. Soon will the judgments of men be corrected, or set aside, by the judgment of God; and the man who was unjustly censured and condemned on earth, shall be justified and honoured before assembled worlds. Then shall the lovers and advocates of truth and righteousness stand forth with great confidence, in the presence of those who afflicted them: and, welcomed by the judge of all, enter in joy and triumph the abodes of glory. There all their sorrows shall be exchanged for heavenly extacies, and their reproaches for eternal honours. There they shall live amidst eternal joys, and every voice they hear shall be the voice of love. They shall dwell in the presence of their Saviour; they shall live in a universe of light and love; they shall flourish in eternal bloom; they shall have fulness of joy, and pleasures for ever more.

THE QUARRELS OF CHRISTIANS
(Concluded.)

At the conclusion of our first article, we said that we would, after a short interval, resume the subject, and examine the objections which are excited against the law of Christ, by "the old man," in the hearts of believers. We now attempt the promised examination. But there are some objections, which are not the result of evil inclinations, but of imperfect apprehension, and we must notice these too. So that our readers must not suppose that we imagine all those who start any of the following objections, to be under the influence of rebellious feelings.—Some of them are, but others we believe are not.

We rejoice to find, that many of our readers acknowledge the propriety and necessity of reviving Christ's own method of settling quarrels among Christians. We do live in hopes of seeing men become Christians *altogether*. The desire of becoming such is certainly being extended, in a most cheering way. And, if we only act up to our convictions, we shall have the desire of our hearts. Nothing but indifference to present light, and neglect of present conviction, can prevent our attaining to the stature of perfect men in Christ Jesus our Lord. It is so in the case before us. If, by the grace of God, we will only try, as well as we can, to avoid mentioning a brother's fault until we have adopted Christ's method with regard to him; and if, on the other hand, we will resolve that, when the congregated church of which we form a part, shall decide that *we* have trespassed against a brother, we will "hear the church," and submit to its censure, we shall undoubtedly soon be enabled to see the propriety of all that is required, and to act consistently therewith. To clear away some apparent obstacles to our understanding and performing our duty towards a trespassing brother, is the end of this article.

1. "But my brother would be offended." Yes, perhaps, if you go about the matter in the common way; but not otherwise. If you go, and so soon as you begin to speak to him let him discover that you are enraged, and "in a passion," then, very probably, he will "fly into a passion" too. "Grievous words stir up anger." Or if, even with apparent calmness or coolness, you should accuse him, absolutely, of an offence, of which he was only

partially guilty, or perhaps entirely innocent; in this case also, you would possibly arouse resentment. "Is thy servant a dog, that he should do this?" would probably escape his faultering lips, or even much severer language. But if, as we said previously, you go to him with a kind, and gentle, and forbearing demeanour, and tell him that, and only that you *know* to be the truth, there will be little danger of his being offended. If you only *accuse* him of a plain and undeniable offence, stating as matter of uncertainty that of which you have no manifest proof, you will very rarely find a brother so unjust and so far lost to all courteous feeling, as to refuse to hear you, or to be offended at what you say.

2. "But surely, when I go the second time, and take others with me, he will then be offended, even if at first he heard me patiently." Not so surely. But, whether he "hears" you, when in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word is established, or not, your duty is plain. You must take this step, or none at all. And if he be offended, the fault is his, not yours. But, were this divinely-instituted mode once generally adopted in the church, and by consequence generally looked upon by Christians as being Christ's own method, there would be little danger of exciting anger by it.

3. "But how *singular* I should make myself. Is it well to be so invidiously strict in minor matters?" You would be singular. Alas! the truth is too plain to be denied. The man that does *all* the will of his Heavenly Master, will be singular, even in the eyes of his master's own family. But, notwithstanding this, if you value your salvation, go not "with a multitude to do evil."—"For strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." To make us "a *peculiar* people, zealous of good works," and especially such good works as he saw fit to specify, was the end for which our Saviour gave himself for us. And many a faithful servant of Christ must bear and brave the charge of singularity, yea, even of affecting singularity, before the world be saved, and the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our God and of his Christ. Many extremely singular lives must be spent before its dying population are "all filled with the Holy Ghost," of "one heart and of one soul," having (in the scriptural sense) "all things common," and "great grace resting on them all."

4. "But there is now no provision made in the church for such an appeal." If there is not, there should be; and whatever may now be the case, there will be when the church returns to its first works. But, even now, there are in some churches meetings of the members generally, at which such matters might be, and even are, introduced and decided. And the introduction of them would not necessarily introduce strife, or diminish hallowed communion among saints. If each and all were sincerely willing to have such a disputed case decided as Christ directs, harmony and union would almost certainly be increased, rather than diminished. And churches, as well as individuals, must seek to conform their proceedings to the "law and testimony" of Christ, in this respect. Too long, fatally long, have they been, in various respects, "wise above what is written." And, if we speak the whole truth, which, in the fear of God, we have declared it is our intention to do, we must assert, that every church that does not institute such an assembling together of its members as shall allow of the adjustment of quarrels, in the way that Christ ordains, is deficient in one of the most essential of all points of discipline.

We must affectionately call the attention of our friends to this important matter. Oh! for such a mode of settling cases of trespass between brethren as shall remove these gross and crying evils,—enduring quarrels, and long-continued alienation of heart. We hope to be able to give some practical suggestions for reviving the scriptural plan in an early number, and in connection with the question of church unity, In the meantime let us, in a case of trespass, at once act in accordance with the first and second directions of Christ; and if we cannot, in the present state of things, "tell it to the church," let us at least refrain from other and evil methods. Let us "rather suffer wrong" to a great extent, than make a brother's failings public, and disgrace our profession, and the holy religion we profess.

5. "But have not the officers, the ministers, the deacons, and 'leaders' of a church sufficient authority to decide such cases?" We know of no Scripture that confers such authority upon them; and certainly whilst the offending party is bound to "hear the church" in its entire state, he is *not* bound to hear a portion of it.

6. "But is it not popery to teach that men should 'hear the church?'" No, by no means. It is popery to teach that the term "church," as used in this passage, means an assembly of bishops, from a great number of churches; and that, therefore, you should "*hear*" them. And it is very foolish too. For, how can a number of shepherds constitute a flock of sheep? But a church of Christ implies a flock of sheep, as well as a shepherd, and the sheep, therefore, constitute the greater part of a church. The shepherds, therefore, are only a part of those assemblies of Christians, which have authority from Christ to decide a case of trespass. To maintain the true meaning of the words "hear the church," then, so far from favouring popery, is the most efficient method of defeating the arrogant and unfounded pretensions of its priests. Let us go back to Christ, and popery must fall, for our mistaken brethren would adhere to it no longer.

7. "But, how can you reconcile these stringent measures with those notions of liberty and toleration of which you speak so much?" There is nothing inconsistent between them, and consequently nothing that requires to be reconciled. The liberty we plead for, is only a liberty to declare and carry out in our practice all the laws of Christ, and consequently this very law respecting quarrels.

8. "But do you not maintain that every Christian has a right to think for himself, and to speak as he is convinced?" We do.

9. "And did you not write in your first article the following sentence, 'Such regard shall be paid, even in heaven, to these decisions of an assembly of sincere Christians: whatsoever they shall determine as to the character of such an offence, shall be binding on the offender; he shall be required to submit to the sentence of his Christian brethren.' But if he be required to submit to 'whatsoever they shall determine,' where is the liberty you boast of?" *Ans.* You utterly mistake our words. If you read the passage again, you must see this, at once. Our words are, "whatsoever they shall determine as to the character of *such* an offence," and "regard shall be paid, even in heaven, to *these* decisions," &c. And you must know we here refer *merely* to cases of trespass between man and man; and not to matters of conscience as to faith.

10. "But did you not, in the commencement of your first article, state the kind of offences or trespasses that the church should take cognizance of; including matters of judgment among them?" No, nothing of the kind. You make a gross mistake. Nothing is further from the meaning of our words, and the words themselves are so plain, that "he who runs may read," and understand them. Our question then was, "Is it possible thus to live?" that is, as we had just explained, to live without "offending," or "taking offence." Our answer was, "In one sense it is possible, but in another it is not." We then showed in what sense a Christian can, and in what sense he cannot, avoid offending. And we concluded our remarks respecting the latter cases with these express words, "Still, however, as far as in us lieth, we must avoid even these." Friend, how could you possibly imagine, when you read those words, that we were then telling you what kind of offences or trespasses *the church may take cognizance of?* But perhaps your mind has recently been much occupied with harrassing matters relative to church government, and if so, might very likely be thinking of that subject, and in a state of confusion at the time you took up our article. We hope the error is now dispelled.

11. "But, after all, what authority have you to make a distinction between cases of trespass between brethren, and cases of judgment as to a matter of faith and duty?" The authority of Jesus Christ, who gives

a different direction in each case. In cases of trespass, we are to "hear the church," but in the other cases the direction is, "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind." Thus, in the ancient church, while there were many diversities of opinion and practice, no party was required to give up such peculiarities, but act as he might be fully persuaded in his own mind; and that all should tolerate each other. These peculiarities were by no means deemed proper causes of offence among the Christians of those days. If any one imagined they were, and wished the church to censure a brother on such an account; there was a rule in their only standard-book of faith and discipline which became an end of all strife. It was as follows, "Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up, for God is able to make him stand."

12. "But has then the church no right to take cognizance of any matters relative to faith or doctrine? Is a minister to teach any error whatever with impunity?" That is another question; and for a full answer to it you must look elsewhere. But we may here say, that we have hitherto maintained nothing to countenance the notion your objection embodies; and we may also refer you to an article which will give you the information you seek. You will find it on p. 183, in sections 10 to 12; and also in the article on the "Right of Private Judgment." You will there find it distinctly stated that *a church* has power to disown an unsound teacher. But still every man must hold fast his sincere convictions.

13. "But, why may not a man use his private judgment in cases of trespass?" If you mean, why should he submit to the church when such a case is decided against him, we answer, because Christ commands it. The case stands thus. When my brother thinks I have trespassed against him, and I think that I have not, and we cannot decide the matter, Christ has told us how to do. After referring it to one or two more we are to tell it to the church with which we assemble, and its decision is to be final. We are to submit to its arbitration. Even if we think its decision is harsh, still we must rather suffer wrong, than refuse to hear it, by continuing the quarrel. God requires of us this submission. "Whatsoever ye (the congregation) shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

14. "But do you mean to say, that whenever the church condemns a trespasser, God condemns him too?" No, by no means. The church may pronounce a member to be guilty when he is not; but God cannot do any such thing. Still, however, God requires the member to submit even to an undeserved punishment, for the sake of peace, and condemns him, if he does not. This is the only binding that is committed to the church. And the member that will not submit to *this* binding, is to be accounted an outlaw: "a heathen man, and a publican." But, the Judge of all the earth will still "do right" as to the supposed offence, whatever the church may do, if the supposed offender will only submit as directed. The church then has only to decide between its members, not between a member and his God, but what it *thus* binds on earth, shall be bound in heaven.

15. "But how, if the church be corrupt?" We do not remember any direct Scripture that decides this, and therefore we think each must use his own judgment in the matter. But if there be good reason to fear that a church is so far corrupt, as to be generally *unchristian* in its character, we think, it so far loses its authority over its members. But a member should very diligently guard against prejudice in this respect.

16. "Well, the matter appears plainer now, but I fear it will be a tedious process. if we have all this to do, whenever a brother trespasses against us." You can make it as short as you like. You need not, in most cases, tell it to the church at all, if, after talking it over in the presence of one or two witnesses, *you* are content to let the affair die away from your remembrance. You need not even take one or two witnesses, if, after mentioning it to your brother between you and him alone, *you* are content to hold your peace about it, and bury it in oblivion. Nay, unless

the welfare of others, or of the church, appears to demand it, you need never mention the trespass of your brother even to himself, provided only you will mention it to no one else, and will not harbour secret feelings of resentment towards him. But if you do seek redress, we beseech you, do not in future set at nought Christ's own directions on any account whatever, much less on account of a little extra trouble.

17. "I don't like such new-fangled notions. There is no telling where to stop, if we pay attention to every new scheme that any one may propose." But is the duty we are urging a new-fangled notion? Or, is it not an integral portion of that law from which not one jot or tittle shall pass away, though heaven and earth should be dissolved? And we do not require you to listen to *any thing* that any one may say; nor yet to listen to any thing that *we* may say, but we do entreat you, as you would not wish to be condemned for resisting increasing light, to listen to *every thing* that Christ says.

18. "But my heart shrinks from so humiliating a task." Then my brother, your heart is not right with God. We beseech you, look to this; and seek to have that disinclination to duty removed. God is striving to subdue all things unto himself; we pray you, work together with him. Submit yourself unto God. Humble yourself beneath his mighty hand, and he will raise you by his power, and enable you to walk in newness of life. He will enable you to walk in *all well-pleasing;* in righteousness and true holiness before him, all the days of your life.

Brethren, in conclusion, we earnestly exhort you to think on these things. Ponder deeply and prayerfully the direction we have considered, and which we now repeat. "*If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone; if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he should neglect to hear them, tell it to the church* (the congregation of brethren); *but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican. Verily, I say unto you, whatsoever ye* (the congregation) *shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven.*"—Matt. xviii. 15, 18.

And when you see the light rejoice in it, and walk steadily on in the safe and peaceful way of universal obedience. "And that, knowing the time that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light." Let us cease to speak of a brother's faults behind his back. Let us strive after all the mind of Christ. Let us settle all our disputes in accordance with his righteous will. Let us be stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as we know that our labour is not in vain in the Lord.

A COUNTRYMAN.

It has often been a matter of wonder, that the principles and reasonings of infidels, though frequently accompanied with great natural and acquired abilities, are seldom known to make any impression on pious thoughtful people. It is said of a gentleman, who was eminent in the literary world, that, in early life, he drank deeply into the free-thinking scheme. He, and one of his companions of the same turn of mind, often carried on their conversations in the hearing of a religious, but illiterate countryman. This gentleman afterwards became a true Christian, and felt concern for the countryman, lest his faith in Christianity should have been shaken. One day, therefore, he asked him, whether what had so frequently been advanced in his hearing, had not produced this effect upon him. "By no means," answered the countryman; "it never made the least impression upon me." "No impression upon you!" said the gentleman; "why you must know that we had read and thought on these things much more than you had any opportunity of doing." "Oh, yes," replied the man; "but I knew also your manner of living; I knew that to maintain such a course of conduct, you found it *necessary* to renounce Christianity."

TEETOTALISM.

THE NECESSITY OF ITS PROMOTION.

Our Teetotal friends must not think that we have forgotten our promise, that the *Christian Investigator* should be the advocate of temperance. We never can forget the great things that God hath recently done, by the instrumentality of Teetotal Societies, and consequently we cannot be careless as to their prosperity and extension. We wish to be thankful for any instrumentality, that God may make efficient for good, and to use it faithfully ourselves, and recommend its adoption by others.

1. We would avoid the dangers into which we greatly fear many, in our day, are falling. We dare not refuse to enter any path of usefulness, merely because it may appear to us humbling in its character, and, at first sight, somewhat *stringent* in its requirements. And when we have evidence that great and truly blessed results have followed the adoption of any plan, *then* we dare not undervalue and despise these results, because of the means by which they were brought about. We dare not limit the Almighty to any of those modes of blessing the human race, that we may have hitherto looked on with approval, nor to them all collectively. We dare not say to Him, What doest thou? We stand in awe of such Scriptures as the following. "Beware lest that come upon you which is spoken of in the prophets. Behold, ye despisers, and wonder and perish: for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in nowise believe, though a man declare it unto you." We do not, of course, imagine that every one that cannot discern, and consequently favour, every mode of operation that shall be succeeded by the smile of the Almighty, shall "perish." But we do believe, that there is very great danger, when we allow any degree of prejudice to influence us in forming our estimate of the claims which any scheme of benevolence may have upon us. We fear that the passage we have just quoted should be viewed by many, in our day, as full of any thing but consolation to them :- though they, perhaps, may not be implicated to its full extent of meaning.

We are convinced that with regard to a variety of matters, of which Teetotalism is one, many are led into serious error, by an advice which is much misunderstood. We allude to the words addressed by Gamaliel to the Chief Priests, "Refrain from these men, and let them alone." Now, however proper it may be, when we see persons attempting to do good in a way that we do not approve, to "let them alone," that is, not to persecute or forbid them; it is by no means proper to reject their plan without any inquiry into its merits; or even to come to a hasty conclusion respecting it. In this sense we may not let alone any method of doing good. As we have opportunity, we must do good unto all men. We must do all the good we can in every possible way. If this, the whole of this, be not, by the grace of God, our desire and determination, we are living below the standard of our Master. If our consciences can rest short of this, they are as yet but partially enlightened. We must, if this be the case with us, look to it, that our faith, our hold of Christ, be not much weaker than we have imagined, or even fallacious. We do not say it must be so, but we do say there is serious ground for self-examination. And we have inspired authority for the assertion. "To him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin." Brethren, be not deceived. This, and this only, is the standard of our efforts. Indeed, the very desire to rest below it, even a willingness to let less than this suffice, is indicative of evil. It indicates, in a way that there is no mistaking, that we neither love God with all our hearts, nor our neighbour as ourselves. And, further, if we can voluntarily allow our minds to remain in this state, we must expect that ere long the Holy Spirit, grieved and resisted by our willingness to violate these first and great commandments of the law, will leave us altogether. "From him that hath not, shall be taken away even that which he hath." And, on the same ground, grace already conferred will be taken away from such as do not desire its increase. If, then, we would do our duty, and save our souls, we must aim unceasingly at this standard, doing all the good we can, in every possible way.

But we fear, as we have already stated, that many, in our day, hold most dangerous notions in this respect. Many seem to have scarcely any idea of the obligations under which their Almighty Creator hath placed them. That they are bound *thus* to fulfil the righteousness of the law, is no part of their creed. We feel a tender and yet sorrowful regard for such; and we therefore not only wish to avoid their error ourselves, but to point it out to them. Hence, an additional motive for advocating Teetotalism, forces itself on our attention. For we are persuaded that if correct views of a Christian's duty were universally prevalent in the church, the church generally, ere this, would have adopted the abstinence principle. And therefore we are also persuaded that the church itself must suffer loss on this account. For the sake of both parties, then, the Christian as well as the drunkard: the person called to the exercise of self-denial, as well as those for whom the task of that self-denial is to be endured, we advocate the adoption of the Teetotal pledge.

2. But, how shall we begin the task? How shall we, whilst urging this act of self-denial upon the Christian world, or rather, upon the inhabitants of the world at large, for they are all *bound to be* Christians, efficiently discharge our task? Nay, in what way even shall we avoid giving offence, and consequently injuring, rather than furthering, the cause we advocate? We feel this, in the present position of the temperance cause, to be no easy task. For, notwithstanding the overwhelming mass of evidence which presents itself in favour of Teetotalism, throughout our country, and various other countries, there are still thousands, even among our Christian brethren, who are as far from the adoption of the declaration and practice, as ever. Indeed, many are further from it than they were, six years ago. They are now, not only averse to its adoption, but they will listen to no arguments in its favour. They think, they have heard all that can be said, their minds are made up, the matter is determined, the very name is odious to them, and every word in its favour seems but to strengthen their aversion. If a periodical, or tract, is presented, they will not read it; and if a meeting is to be held, and a lecture delivered, they will not attend it. And the prejudice of individuals, in time, influences communities and convocations. And active measures of opposition succeed the passiveness of dislike. Views once held firmly, and even embodied in ecclesiastical regulations, are now found to have too near a resemblance to the novelties which have become so obnoxious, and they too, are abandoned. Channels, too, through which, in more generous years, sentiments of benevolence were allowed to circulate, even when apparently pushed too far, are closed. Chapels and schools, in some instances, no longer may be filled by sounds of sympathy for the unhappy drunkard—they, too, are closed, perhaps—but no, we cherish brighter hopes, or we had said—*for ever*.

In the meantime, intemperance is sending tens of thousands down to hell. The tide of drunkenness still sweeps unceasingly, though we do hope, somewhat less horribly, across our country. And the crush of earthly hopes and comforts,—the sighs, and tears, and groans, of ten thousand ruined families,—the burning-tinted, hell-presaging visages, and alcohol-scorched stomachs of twice or thrice ten thousand human beings, *these* are all trifling matters, when put into comparison with that other evil which is still occurring daily. Each drunkard has a soul! Oh, when the graves shall yield their dead, and when THAT DAY shall come, —when the drunken and the sober shall confront each other before the great white throne, and Him that sits thereon, what a disclosure will be made! If but one soul is lost, that, by the united and long-continued self-denial of all the Christians in England, might have been saved, the light of eternity shall show that even such a loss transcends "the crush of matter, and the wreck of worlds." Yet, what is one, among the thousands that are perishing on every hand—perishing, even whilst surrounded by multitudes that might help them; and who, consequently, *ought* to do it. This is a most appalling thought. So far as the Total

Abstinence plan has been *fairly* tried, it has been crowned with great success. And we may now say, without hesitation, that were it adopted by the religious part of the community generally, the intemperance of our land would quickly hide its head.

How necessary, then, is the advocacy of Total Abstinence. The influence, the talents, and the example of all who see and feel the responsibility, in which the sober classes of our countrymen are now involved, is still demanded. This responsibility must be pointed out to them. Notwithstanding all the prejudice with which the minds of many are fortified, we must attempt to gain even their attention. The cause needs the help of all, and of none more than those very persons that now look down upon it with indifference. For though the reports of its progress are, we believe, as cheering as ever, the countenance of the Christian church at large, is still indispensable to its perpetuity and triumph. Its continued and permanent progress, can only be secured by enlisting in the ranks of its advocates, the leaders of the Christian community; for until they move, the community itself will not move. We must, therefore, whilst advocating this scheme of benevolent self-denial, address even those that are now most strongly opposed to us. And though we must speak plainly, we must also speak with courtesy and affection. We must not give way to angry feelings and utter angry words. Were we to do this, our Master would withhold his blessing, and we should spend our strength in vain. No! the struggle with our opponents must be one of tenderness, and principle, and love. We *must* engage in a warfare with the prejudices, indifference, and mistaken notions of our Christian brethren; but we must overcome by commending the cause we plead for to their consciences in the sight of God. And, we do not despair. We are not greatly discouraged, notwithstanding all the obstacles by which we are surrounded. Only let us go to the work in the way we have described, and we shall find in very deed, that truth is great, and love "stronger than death." The traveller that hitherto hath wrapped a cloak of prejudice fast around him, to screen him from the blast of harsh and angry declamation; shall soon begin to feel the warmth of kind expostulation, and the folds of his prejudice shall slacken; and his cloak at length shall be thrown entirely off. His heart shall then prove accessible; the tale of the drunkard's woes shall excite his sympathies, and melted into pity, he shall take his place among the drunkard's friends.

Such are our convictions, and such we hope will be the character of our advocacy of the Total Abstinence Society. We are Teetotalers ourselves; and we congratulate our Teetotal brethren on the general aspect of the cause at present, though so much that is difficult still impedes its progress, and though there are many things now in connection with it, of which we cannot approve.—May the Lord God of our fathers make you a thousand times as many as ye are!

WHAT CONSTITUTES TRUE HAPPINESS.

For my part I must profess that (by the mercy of God) I have made it the work of many a year, to look about me, and think wherein the felicity of man doth indeed consist: and I have long been past doubt (as much as I am that I am a man) that it is not in transitory sensual delights, and that these are such lean and dry commodities, and pitiful pleasures, leaving men so speedily in a forlorn state, that I am contented that my greatest enemy should have my part of them. I have renounced them to God (as any part of my felicity), and I renounce them to men. Let them do with me about these things as God will give them leave. I will have a portion after death, or I'll have none.—*Baxter.*

ANCIENT CHRISTIANITY.

"It is a maxim among us Christians, that we cannot possibly suffer any real hurt, if we cannot be convicted of doing any real evil. You may kill indeed, but you cannot hurt us." These are the words of St. Justin Martyr, in the second century. Would that the Christians of modern times could say the same!

GOOD RESOLUTIONS.

The following resolutions were recently passed at a meeting of the members and officers of the Methodist New Connexion, in the Liverpool Circuit. As they are to a considerable extent in agreement with the principles which we advocate, we give them a place in the Investigator. We have previously avowed our determination to have done with the New Connexion Conference controversy, and we hope to stand firmly by this determination. But we have *not* promised, that when any of those who differ from us in some things, publish resolutions in unison with our own feelings and wishes, we will not let our friends have the benefit of them.

THE RESOLUTIONS.

Resolved,

1.—That as members of the church, we feel it necessary, and deem it incumbent upon us, to observe more frequently and fervently the duties of private prayer, reading the Scriptures, and self-examination; and to make improvement in personal piety the object of diligent and unceasing pursuit.

2.—That we deem ourselves under a solemn obligation to attend the social and public means of grace as punctually as possible,—that slight obstacles ought not to prevent our regular observance of these ordinances; and we therefore determine, in the strength of God, to be more frequently present at the preaching of the word, and at our social prayer meetings, both on the Sabbath and on the week-night.

3.—That we believe that class-meetings and the Lord's Supper have peculiarly powerful demands upon us;—we, therefore, by the help of God, determine, to observe these ordinances regularly; and in our class meetings to be more conscientious and correct in describing the real state of our minds; so that by being faithful to ourselves, we may secure faithful and suitable instruction.

4.—That in order to effect an improvement in our congregations, we consider it our duty, not only to attend regularly and punctually on public ordinances ourselves, but as far as is practicable, to enforce the same regularity of attendance on the members of our respective families.

5.—That we deem it a most solemn duty to urge the necessity of immediate repentance on those members of our families who, we have reason to fear, are destitute of salvation; and that we will, according to the grace and ability given us, embrace every opportunity of doing good in this department.

6.—That we deem it our imperative duty, to direct our attention, to at least some one amongst our neighbours, friends, or acquaintances, who may habitually neglect the means of grace, and to invite them frequently to accompany us to the house of God, fervently praying, that under the preaching of the Gospel they may be savingly impressed.

7.—That we deem it necessary and obligatory upon us, to observe the demeanour of those who may sit near to us in the chapel, and who though not members, frequently attend the public worship of God, to endeavour to cultivate a friendly intercourse with them, and, if any serious feeling be manifested, to do our utmost to cherish it by affectionate counsel, and more especially by urging them to accompany us to the class to which we belong.

[But there is danger lest the followers of Christ should get wrong in cultivating a "*friendly intercourse*" with unconverted persons, before they are truly troubled on account of sin, and resolved on a change of life. *Kind attention* is proper enough; "*friendly intercourse*" is not so safe. And it is rather a dangerous practice to look much about in a place of worship, especially during worship. Perhaps we should do more good by being examples of devout attention and solemn devotion. Ed.]

8.—That as members of the church we are bound to glorify God by bringing forth the fruits of the Spirit, that we therefore resolve, by the help of God, to put away from amongst us all evil speaking, envying, bitterness, and resentment; to love as brethren,—to love one another with a pure heart fervently—to be truthful in our sayings, and honest in our dealings, and by meekness, temperance, and purity, to adorn the doctrines of God our Saviour in all things.

[This is excellent. Ed.]

9.—As prayer leaders we acknowledge the obligation that is laid upon us of being punctual in attending to our appointments, and we therefore pledge ourselves never to neglect them, except in case of necessity, and even then to make every effort to procure a suitable supply.

10.—That in our addresses to the throne of grace, we will endeavour to be short and fervent—that these addresses shall chiefly consist of petitions on behalf of our members, leaders, circuit and local preachers, also for the unconverted hearers, and for a general and permanent revival of God's work amongst us.

[If people pray in the spirit, they will need no human limitations or restraints to keep them right in prayer. Ed.]

11.—That as leaders we will be more faithful and searching, but more tender and affectionate in our addresses to the people; that we will be more mindful of the sick and the absent—taking care that their cases be attended to with as little delay as possible,—that we will do our utmost to maintain the laws and discipline of the Connexion, and that nothing but a really insurmountable obstacles shall prevent us from attending the leaders' meeting.

[A few words about maintaining the laws of the Connexion, &c., will be found below. Ed.]

12.—That as preachers we are bound, in our public ministrations, to dwell more prominently on those great truths which tend to the conversion of sinners and the establishment of believers:—that aware of the importance of pastoral visiting, we will devote as much time as possible to this duty, and to embrace every opportunity those visits may afford, of exhorting and warning those who manifest an indifference to their eternal interests.

Finally—That as no means, however well adapted—however diligently employed, can be effectual without the Divine blessing, we would acknowledge and exercise a constant dependance on the Holy Spirit, for success in all our efforts.

Only let those who still adhere to the New Connexion, carry out these resolutions, and we shall shortly have not only to hail them as our fellow-labourers, but to rejoice in the success which must attend their efforts. We except from our approbation of these resolutions the sentence which refers to the "laws and discipline of the Connexion." We wish to maintain only the "laws and discipline" of Jesus Christ, and to maintain them *only as such*. We are convinced that when a Christian church is assembled, in the fear of God, for the exercise of salutary discipline, it would be as easy and quite as safe for it to decide the case in hand, by such portions of the New Testament as should then be found to bear upon it, as by any human standard that ever has been, or ever will be, compiled. And we may be allowed to express our conviction, that if, in addition to the duties which the resolutions were intended to embody, they had embraced some other duties or portions of duty that are clearly inculcated in the New Testament, they would have acquired a still greater excellence than they now exhibit. "These ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone."

We hint, in conclusion, to our friends, that they have a perfect right to all the good that is taught, by even their worst enemies. Only let them *prove all things*, and they may then, without fear, avail themselves of all that is good, and "hold it fast." Sometimes people run away from that which is good, when they see it in connection with that which is evil. We would have our friends to follow a more excellent way.

THE STATE OF THE CHURCH;

OR A WORD TO US ALL.

[*From the Boston Recorder.*]

We should state facts, were we to make such assertions as these, namely, There are few revivals of religion in the country; some forms of iniquity have gained great power, and are gaining greater; in many churches the spirit of controversy has consumed the spirit of piety; in others the spirit of worldliness has gained a mournful pre-eminence, and thousands of the saints are led captive by it. We might go on making statements of this kind to a much greater extent, but these are sufficient for our present purpose.

"Then let us sound the loud voice of alarm," say certain of the disciples, "let us send the rebuke of her sloth through all the borders of Zion; let us sanctify a fast; let us call a solemn assembly; let us awake the watchmen of Zion, for they are slumberers also; let us make a great, a united, a powerful effort,—let the whole kingdom of God be addressed;—let us say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Hold not back."

Far be it from us to quench, in any degree, the spirit of sympathy in the declension of Zion. Let our right hand forget her cunning, if Jerusalem be not our chief joy, and if we do not pray for the peace of those who love her. Therefore, we take no exceptions to the language we have quoted; but we would, in the most sincere Christian kindness, point such as use it in another direction.

There may be those who cry, "The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord," who nevertheless are not lively stones in that spiritual building. We have seen sympathy spread over the moral wastes of half a continent, while the whole energy of it was needed on the spiritual desert of the owner's heart. We have seen the whole church, the object of apparently the most sincere pity, and the gravest rebukes; while that pity would have been well spent in mourning over personal deficiencies; and when every weapon of denunciation might have found a fair mark in sins at home. And more—it does not require a thousandth part of the moral energy to raise, with a multitude, the loud voice of reproach at the sins of the church or the nation; that is required to quench only one of the minor passions of one's own heart. We may boldly point our artillery at the abominations that surround us, while we have not the moral courage to strike an energetic blow at the sinful principle within us. Far more easily can we rush with the crowd to the assault of other men's sins, than boldly face our own, and patiently go forward in the work of their destruction. There is something grand and exciting, in giving one to another, the cry of "onward," while there is so noble a mark as the sins of the church or of the nation; but one's own deficiencies of character—O that is small game.

Now, disciple of Christ, we strike not at any tender concern you may feel in the general welfare of the church of God. We care not how broad are your sympathies. We rejoice in the strength and depth of your emotions of interest in the welfare of Zion, in her whole extent. But we do caution you to beware of being drawn by any object whatever, even Zion's welfare, from the spiritual care and regulation of your own mind.

While you mourn over desolation elsewhere, see to it that your own soul is not a moral waste. Let not care for the church consume those energies which the culture of your own heart demands. Zion's present weakness and tarnished honour is owing more than to any other cause, to the neglect of personal holiness. Your zeal for Zion has no good foundation,—it indeed is not a spiritual reality, but a shadow only, if it be not based on a well kept heart—if it do not originate in a soul framed to communion with God—and animated with the holy principles of the Gospel.

This, then, is the bearing of our present appeal. Let the present state of the church awaken your anxieties, that your own vineyard, at least, shall be well kept. If tares have started, and are luxuriant in every other field, let there be at least *one* from which they shall be expelled even to the last of their number. If the soldiers of Zion have not become a mighty multitude, let there be *one* soldier of the cross firm and true, and be that honour *your's*.

WHO SHALL BE SAVED?

Though it be a great question whether serious diligence in a corrupt religion will save a man; it is past all question, and agreed by all sides, that no religion will save a man that is not serious, sincere, and diligent in it. If thou be of the truest religion in the world, and art not true thyself to that religion, the religion is good, but it is none of thine. Objectively, thou art of a true and good religion, the things in themselves are true and good; but, subjectively, thou art of no religion at all; for if thou art not serious, hearty, and diligent in it, it is certain that thou dost not truly entertain it, and make it thine; but it is thy books that have the true religion, or thy tongue, or fancy, or brain, but not thy heart. And the best meat on thy table, if that goeth no further than thy mouth, will never feed thee, or preserve thy life. So certain is the salvation of every holy mortified Christian, and so certain the damnation of every ungodly, worldly, fleshly, sensualist; that I had a thousandfold rather have my soul in the case of a godly Anabaptist, yea, of a Monk, or Friar, among the Papists, that liveth a truly heavenly life, in the love of God and man, and in a serious diligent obedience to God, according to his knowledge, than in the case of a Protestant, or whomsoever you can imagine to be rightest in his opinions, that is worldly and sensual, and a stranger to the power and serious practice of his own profest religion, and void of a holy and heavenly heart and life. If ever such a man be saved, the principles of all religion do deceive us.—*Baxter.*

ANSWER TO INQUIRY.

Dear Friend,

A person in this neighbourhood lately got a fortune of three hundred pounds, and when a person called upon her for a subscription to a benevolent institution, she gave him *three shillings.* Would you be so kind as to expose such niggardliness in your Christian Investigator?

A. B.

Ans. How does A. B. know that the conduct referred to in his note was niggardliness? How does he know but that the person referred to gave as much as she ought to give? And how should I be able to judge what the person referred to ought to have given in any particular case? I fear A. B. does not properly understand these words of the Saviour; "JUDGE NOT." We are not qualified to judge how much a person should give to any particular benevolent institution. We know that a person ought to employ all that he has for God and for the good of mankind; but we do not know *in what particular manner* he ought to employ it. We know that a man should do as much good with his money as possible, but how much he should give to this or that institution, and how much he should keep in his possession for other benevolent objects, we know not.

In subscribing to benevolent institutions there are several things which ought to be considered. We ought to consider 1. The merits of the institution. All benevolent institutions are not of equal importance. Some are of *infinite* importance, while others are of comparatively *little* importance. The Bible Society is of incalculably greater importance than the Gateshead Association for Training Female Servants; and the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society is of far greater importance than the Newcastle Mechanics' Institute. And according to the merits of benevolent institutions we may, with propriety, regulate our contributions to their support. A man with a thousand a year may, with propriety, give to some benevolent institutions only three shillings or eighteen-pence, while to another benevolent institution he may be bound to give five or six hundreds a year. So in the case mentioned by A. B. So far from its being certain that the sum contributed by the person in the case referred to was too little; it might, for any thing I know, be two and elevenpence too much.

2. Again; in subscribing to benevolent institutions we ought to consider the *circumstances* of the institution. Some benevolent institutions are in great difficulties, while others are supplied with funds in abundance. Some benevolent institutions are very popular, so that almost any one will contribute to them; while others, of greater importance, perhaps, are *not* popular, and are supported by very few. When persons ask me for a contribution to a benevolent institution that is in easy circumstances, I may with propriety give him a small contribution, or perhaps no contribution at all; but if I were asked for a contribution to a benevolent institution that was in difficulties for want of funds, it might be my

duty to give thirty or forty pounds. So in the case before us. The three shillings given by the person referred to by A. B., might be as liberal a contribution as the case required, for ought I know: it might be much more than was required.

3. Again, the person referred to by A. B. might have other claims upon her three hundred pounds, besides the claims of public benevolent institutions. She might have parents, or children, or brothers or sisters dependent for support upon her. She might see it to be her duty to erect a Sabbath School,—to found a library,—or to provide for some poor fatherless or afflicted children. She might see it to be her duty to keep the money in her possession for the purpose of publishing cheap good books; or she might think it her duty to lend it to some other person to be employed in some such way. She might have a hundred claims upon her, of which A. B. knew nothing, all stronger than the claims of the institution to which she contributed the three shillings.

In all such matters as these, we must leave people to their own consciences and to their God. We may preach the general doctrine that our money is the Lord's, and that we are not to lay it up for ourselves on earth, nor waste it in extravagance, but to employ it in his service, in doing good to the bodies and souls of men; but we must not attempt to judge for people in what sums, or in what particular way of beneficence, they should dispose of their money. We may offer them information, and give them advice on these points; but we must allow them to judge for themselves. We must not suppose that no way of spending or employing money is right, but that which seems right to us. We may be best able to judge how we ought to dispose of *our own* property, but we may not be able to judge how another man ought to dispose of *his* property. The various ways of doing good are endless, and one man may be able to serve his Maker and contribute to the happiness of mankind better in one way, and another man in another way. It is our business to endeavour to find out the way in which we can ourselves best serve God and benefit mankind, and to labour in that way with all our might; and we must leave our brethren to do the same. "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind." To call a man niggardly because he does not happen to contribute his money to the institution to which I contribute mine, or because he does not contribute to their support in the same measure as myself, is not right. Our business is to inculcate the great principles of the Gospel on this subject, and to leave the application of the principles to each man's own conscience. As we said before, we may offer instruction and advice as to the proper application of these principles, but we must judge no man; we must leave every one to judge for himself what mode of doing good is best, and to act upon his judgment freely in the fear of God. Is not this right, think you, A. B.?

INTELLIGENCE.

The Mossley friends have separated from the Conference, but we have not yet heard what particular course they intend to pursue. We hope that amidst all changes and excitements, they will remain fixed in their attachment to Christ, and in their determination to God, and for a better world. Times of excitement and change are dangerous times, and require more than usual watchfulness, and more than usual recourse to God in prayer. By all means let our dear friends seek heavenly help and counsel from God, and live and move in his fear all the day long. Let them guard against every thing violent, and against every thing rash. But let them not be afraid. If they are faithful, God will make plain their way.

We have received very cheering intelligence from many places, but we have not room for the communications at present.

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AND

EVANGELICAL REFORMER;

For the Promotion of sound Religious Knowledge, and the Inculcation of Temperance and Peace, and of the whole Religion of Christ.

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ON EVANGELICAL PREACHING, PREACHING CHRIST, &c.

We are desirous that our friends should read the following letter from John Wesley with very serious attention: we think it calculated to do great good. There has been a great deal of talk for many years past about the best way of preaching. The principal part of those who have talked and written on this subject have contended that *that* kind of preaching is best calculated to do good, that consists principally and almost entirely in stating and urging the divinity of Christ's person, the personality of the Holy Ghost, the atonement made by his death, justification by faith, and one or two other doctrines of the Gospel. It has been declared a hundred and a thousand times both from the pulpit and the press, and it has been ten thousand times repeated in conversation, that this is the only kind of preaching that can convert sinners, and that this is the kind of preaching that God has always honoured in bringing about revivals of religion. That kind of preaching which, while it proclaims the divinity of Christ, the atonement, the influences of the spirit, and justification by faith in Christ, goes forward to inculcate the whole Christian system, both of doctrine and duty, has been represented as tending to harden men in sin, and to turn the followers of Christ into cold and miserable self-righteous pharisees. We have long been of a very different opinion. It has been our conviction for years, that the most useful preaching is that which unfolds and inculcates, in a spirit of Christian fervour and affection, the whole Gospel of Christ. Every passing year has tended to strengthen this conviction. The more we study the New Testament, and the more we learn of the history of the religion of Christ, the more evident does it become to us, that all *partial* preaching of the Gospel is of hurtful tendency, and that if either sinners are to be converted, or believers established and perfected, on a large scale, it must be by the plain, the faithful, and the full exhibition of the whole counsel of God. We have not time at present, or we might show that the preaching which God has honoured from age to age by making it the means of great revivals of religion, is *not* the partial preaching which has so long and so loudly been extolled, but such preaching as consisted in the statement and enforcement of the whole Christian system. We might begin with that wonderful revival of religion which took place in the days of Christ and his Apostles in Judea,—we might trace the revivals which took place at a little later period in various countries of the Gentiles,—we might give the history of the Waldenses, of the Lollards, and the history of the reformation,—we might trace the revivals of religion which have taken place in our own country from the days of the earlier Puritans to this day,—we might take in the history of revivals of religion in America for several ages past, and show that in all cases the kind of preaching which has been rendered most useful both in the conversion of sinners and in the improvement of churches, has been the free, the faithful, and the zealous inculcation of the plain full Gospel of Christ.

The letter which follows, gives us some very important information respecting that vast and glorious revival in which John Wesley was so great an instrument. Those who are acquainted with John Wesley's sermons, know that they are exceedingly practical, and that they exhibit and enforce the religion of Christ without any partiality. He does not pass over the atonement, the divinity of Christ, and justification by faith; but he never stops at these doctrines. While he lays them down as the *foundations* of Gospel truth, he takes care to rear on the foundation a complete and well-proportioned building. While he proclaims a free, a full, and a universal salvation, he takes care to insist on the established conditions of salvation, and to enforce upon all who believe in Christ, the whole round of Christian duties. He goes through Christ's Sermon on the Mount from beginning to end, and enforces its long catalogue of precepts with all his might. He does not stop here. He exhibits the Saviour's example, and presses home the truth, that all who believe in Christ, ought to walk as he also walked. He explains and applies the Saviour's parables, and urges on the conscience the practical lessons they were intended to inculcate with all his might. In short, he preaches with the utmost simplicity of which he is capable, and with the greatest faithfulness and fervour conceivable, the whole round of Christian duty. Such is the character of Wesley's preaching, and such is the character of his writings generally. He was a faithful, thorough-going practical preacher of the whole religion of Christ. Now it will be seen from the following letter, that it was to this impartial, thorough-going, wholesome kind of preaching, and especially to the explanation and enforcement of Christian duty, as laid down in Christ's Sermon on the Mount, that John Wesley himself attributed, under God, his great and wonderful success in saving souls. It will also be seen, that John Wesley regarded the introduction of what was then so undeservedly called *Gospel preaching*, and which is still unjustly honoured with the name of *Evangelical Preaching*, or *Preaching Christ*,—that kind of preaching which dwells principally and almost exclusively on a few leading doctrines, while it leaves the precepts and example of Christ almost unnoticed,—it will be seen, I say, that to the introduction of this spurious kind of preaching Christ, this misnamed evangelical preaching, into the Methodist congregations, he attributes the decline of true religion in the Methodist societies. And we do not entertain a doubt, but that to this mangling of the Gospel, this partial way of preaching Christ, this perpetual dwelling on a few first principles of the doctrine of Christ, to the neglect of other portions of Christ's doctrine, is to be attributed the present feeble, fallen, and perilous condition of so many churches, and the low and languishing state of religion generally at the present day. We have published a brief statement of our views on Evangelical Preaching before, towards the close of the first volume of the Evangelical Reformer; we feel great pleasure in being able to prove that on this subject, as well as on most other subjects, the doctrine of the Evangelical Reformer is in accordance with the doctrine of John Wesley, as well as in accordance with the Gospel of Christ.

We would further observe, before we introduce the letter itself, that though we consider the *sentiments* in this letter to be correct, we do not consider that in every instance the *words* are quite correctly used. We refer to the sense in which the writer of the letter uses the two phrases, *Preaching the Gospel*, and *Preaching the Law*. He tells us in the second and third paragraphs of the following letter, that by *preaching the Gospel*, he means "preaching the love of God to sinners, preaching the life, death, resurrection, and intercesison of Christ, with all the blessings which, in consequence thereof, are freely given to true believers:" and that by *preaching the law*, he means, "explaining and enforcing the commands of Christ, briefly comprised in the Sermon on the Mount." We consider that *preaching the Gospel* means, in the sense in which the phrase is used in the *New Testament*, preaching the whole religion of Christ, its doctrines, its facts, and its precepts, without exception, and without partiality. We consider the phrase, *Preaching the Gospel*, as it is used in the New Testament, to mean the same as *preaching Christ*, and what John Wesley understood by *preaching Christ*, will be seen by some extracts from his works which come after the following letter. It will be seen from those extracts that John Wesley understood *preaching Christ* to mean, *preaching the whole religion of Christ*. We now introduce John Wesley's letter.

London, December 20, 1751.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—

The point you speak of in your letter of September 21, is of a very important nature. I have had many serious thoughts concerning it, particularly for some months last past, therefore I was not willing to speak hastily or slightly of it, but rather delayed till I could consider it thoroughly.

I mean, by *preaching the Gospel*, preaching the love of God to sinners, preaching the life, death, resurrection, and intercession of Christ, with all the blessings which, in consequence thereof, are freely given to true believers.

By *preaching the law*, I mean explaining and enforcing the commands of Christ, briefly comprised in the Sermon on the Mount.

Now it is certain, preaching the Gospel to penitent sinners "begets faith;" that it "sustains and increases spiritual life in true believers." Nay, sometimes it "teaches and guides" them that believe; yea, and "convinces them that believe not."

So far all are agreed. But what is the stated means of feeding and comforting believers? What is the means, as of begetting spiritual life where it is not, so of sustaining and increasing it where it is?

Here they divide. Some think preaching the law only; others, preaching the Gospel only. I think neither the one nor the other; but duly mixing both, in every place, if not in every sermon.

I think, the right method of preaching is this:—At our first beginning to preach at any place, after a general declaration of the love of God to sinners, and his willingness that they should be saved, to preach the law in the strongest, the closest, the most searching manner possible; only intermixing the Gospel here and there, and showing it, as it were, afar off.

After more and more persons are convinced of sin, we may mix more and more of the Gospel, in order to "beget faith," to raise into spiritual life those whom the law hath slain; but this is not to be done too hastily neither. Therefore it is not expedient wholly to omit the law; not only because we may well suppose that many of our hearers are still unconverted, but because otherwise there is danger, that many who are convinced will heal their wounds slightly; therefore, it is only in private converse with a thoroughly convinced sinner, that we should preach nothing but the Gospel.

If, indeed, we could suppose a whole congregation to be thus convinced, we should need to preach only the Gospel: and the same we might do if our whole congregation were supposed to be newly justified. But when these grow in grace, and in the knowledge of Christ, a wise builder would preach the law to them again; only taking particular care to place every part of it in a gospel light, as not only a command, but a privilege also, as a branch of the glorious liberty of the sons of God. He would take equal care to remind them, that this is not the cause, but the fruit of their acceptance with God; that other cause, "other foundation can no man lay, than that which is laid, even Jesus Christ;" that we are still forgiven and accepted, only for the sake of what he hath done and suffered for us; and that all true obedience springs from love to him, grounded on his first loving us. He would labour, therefore, in preaching every part of the law, to keep the love of Christ continually before their eyes; that thence they might draw fresh life, vigour, and strength, to run the way of his commandments.

Thus would he preach the law even to those who were pressing on towards the mark. But to those who were careless or drawing back, he would preach it in another manner, nearly as he did before they were convinced of sin. To those, meanwhile, who were earnest, but feebleminded, he would preach the Gospel chiefly; yet variously intermixing more or less of the law, according to their various necessities.

By preaching the law in the manner above described, he would teach them how to walk in him whom they had received. Yea, even the same means (the main point wherein, it seems, your mistake lies) would both sustain and increase their spiritual life. For the commands are food, as well as the promises; food equally wholesome, equally substantial. These, also, duly applied, not only direct, but likewise nourish and strengthen the soul.

Of this you appear not to have the least conception; therefore, I will endeavour to explain it. I ask, then, do not all the children of God experience, that when God gives them to see deeper into his blessed law, whenever he gives a new degree of light, he gives, likewise, a new degree of strength? Now I see, he that loves me, bids me do this; and now I feel I can do it, through Christ strengthening me.

Thus light and strength are given by the same means, and frequently in the same moment; although sometimes there is a space between. For instance: I hear the command "Let your communication be always in grace, meet to minister grace to the hearers." God gives me more light into this command. I see the exceeding height and depth of it. At the same time I see (by the same light from above) how far I have fallen short of it. I am ashamed; I am humbled before God. I earnestly desire to keep it better; I pray to him that hath loved me for more strength, and I have the petition I ask of him. Thus the law not only convicts the unbeliever, and enlightens the believing soul, but also conveys food to a believer, sustains and increases his spiritual life and strength. And if it increases his spiritual life and strength, it cannot but increase his comfort also. For, doubtless, the more we are alive to God, the more we shall rejoice in him; the greater measure of his strength we receive, the greater will be our consolation also.

And all this, I conceive, is clearly declared in one single passage of Scripture: "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple; the statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey, and the honey-comb." They are both food and medicine; they both refresh, strengthen, and nourish the soul.

Not that I would advise to preach the law without the Gospel, any more than the Gospel without the law. Undoubtedly both should be preached in their turns; yea, both at once, or both in one: all the conditional promises are instances of this. They are law and gospel mixed together.

According to this model, I should advise every preacher continually to preach the law; the law grafted upon, tempered by, and animated with, the Spirit of the Gospel. I advise him to declare, explain, and enforce every command of God; but meantime, to declare in every sermon (and the more explicitly the better), that the first and great command to a Christian is, "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ;" that Christ is all in all, our "wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption;" that all life, love, strength, are from him alone, and all freely given to us through faith. And it will ever be found, that the law thus preached both enlightens and strengthens the soul; that it both nourishes and teaches; that it is the guide, "food, medicine, and stay" of the believing soul.

Thus all the Apostles built up believers; witness all the Epistles of St. Paul, James, Peter, and John. And upon this plan all the Methodists first set out. In this manner, not only my brother and I, but Mr Maxfield, Nelson, James Jones, Westell, and Reeves, all preached at the beginning.

By this preaching it pleased God to work those mighty effects in London, Bristol, Kingswood, Yorkshire, and Newcastle. By means of this, seventy-nine persons received remission of sins in one day at Bristol only; most of them while I was opening and enforcing, in this manner, our Lord's Sermon upon the Mount.

In this manner John Downes, John Bennett, John Haughton, and all the other Methodists preached, till James Wheatley came among them, who never was clear, perhaps not sound, in the faith. According to his understanding was his preaching; an unconnected rhapsody of unmeaning words, like Sir John Suckling's,

> "Verses smooth and soft as cream,
> In which was neither depth nor stream."

Yet (to the utter reproach of the Methodist congregations) this man became a most popular preacher. He was admired more and more wherever he went, till he went over the second time into Ireland, and conversed more intimately than before with some of the Moravian preachers.

The consequence was, that he leaned more and more both to their doctrine and manner of preaching. At first several of our preachers complained of this; but in the space of a few months, (so incredible is the force of soft words,) he, by slow and imperceptible degrees, brought almost all the preachers then in the kingdom to think and speak like himself.

These, returning to England, spread the contagion to some of their brethren. But still the far greater part of the Methodist preachers thought and spoke as they had done from the beginning.

This is the plain fact. As to the fruit of this new manner of preaching, (entirely new to the Methodists) speaking much of the promises, little of the commands; (even to unbelievers, and still less to believers,) you think it has done great good; I think it has done great harm.

I think it has done great harm to the preachers; not only to James Wheatley himself, but to those who have learned of him, David Trathen, Thomas Webb, Robert Swindells, and John Maddern: I fear to others also; all of whom are but shadows of what they were: most of them have exalted themselves above measure, as if they only "preached Christ, preached the Gospel." And as highly as they have exalted themselves, so deeply have they despised their brethren; calling them "legal preachers, legal wretches," and (by a cant name) "Doctors," or "Doctors of Divinity." They have not a little despised their ministers also, for "countenancing the Doctors," as they termed them. They have made their faults (real or supposed) common topics of conversation, hereby cherishing in themselves the very Spirit of Ham; yea, of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram.

I think it has likewise done great harm to their hearers; diffusing among them their own prejudice against the other preachers; against their ministers, me in particular, (of which you have been an undeniable instance,) against the scriptural, Methodist manner of preaching Christ, so that they could no longer bear sound doctrine; they could no longer hear the plain old truth with profit or pleasure, nay, hardly with patience.

After hearing such preachers for a time, you yourself (need we further witnesses?) could find in my preaching no food for your soul; nothing to strengthen you in the way; no inward experience of a believer; it was all barren and dry; that is, you had no taste for mine or John Nelson's preaching; it neither refreshed nor nourished you.

Why, this is the very thing I assert: that the Gospel preachers, so called, corrupt their hearers; they vitiate their taste, so that they cannot relish sound doctrine; and spoil their appetite, so that they cannot turn it into nourishment; they, as it were, feed them with sweetmeats, till the genuine wine of the kingdom seems quite insipid to them. They give them cordial upon cordial, which makes them all life and spirit for the present; but, meantime, their appetite is destroyed, so that they can neither retain nor digest the pure milk of the word.

Hence it is, that (according to the constant observation I have made, in all parts both of England and Ireland,) preachers of this kind (though quite the contrary appears at first,) spread death, not life, among their hearers. As soon as that flow of spirits goes off, they are without life, without power, without any strength or vigour of soul; and it is extremely difficult to recover them, because they still cry out, "Cordials! cordials!" of which they have had too much already, and have no taste for the food which is convenient for them. Nay, they have an utter aversion to it, and that confirmed by principle, having been taught to call it husks, if not poison: how much more to those bitters which are previously needful to restore their decayed appetite.

This was the very case when I went last into the north. For some time before my coming, John Downes had scarce been able to preach at all; the three others in the round were such as styled themselves Gospel Preachers. When I came to review the societies, with great expectation of finding a vast increase, I found most of them lessened by one-third; one entirely broken up. That of Newcastle itself was less by a hundred members than when I visited it before. And of these that remained, the far greater number in every place were cold, weary, heartless, dead. Such were the blessed effects of this Gospel preaching! of this new method of preaching Christ!

On the other hand, when, in my return, I took an account of the societies in Yorkshire, chiefly under the care of John Nelson, one of the old way, in whose preaching you could find no life, no food, I found them all alive, strong, and vigorous of soul, believing, loving, and praising God their Saviour; and increased in number from eighteen or nineteen hundred to upwards of three thousand. These had been continually fed with that wholesome food which you could neither relish nor digest. From the beginning they had been taught both the law and the Gospel. "God loves you; therefore, love and obey him. Christ died for you; therefore, die to sin. Christ is risen; therefore, rise in the image of God. Christ liveth evermore; therefore, live to God, till you live with him in glory." So we preached; and so you believed. This is the scriptural way, the true way. God grant we may never turn therefrom, to the right hand or to the left!

I am,
My dear friend,
Your ever affectionate brother.
JOHN WESLEY.

ADDITIONAL EXTRACTS FROM WESLEY'S WORKS ON PREACHING CHRIST.

The following extract on the same subject as the foregoing letter is from page 130, of vol. 12, of the new edition of Wesley's Works.

"If we duly join faith and works in all our preaching, we shall not fail of a blessing. But of all preaching, what is usually called *Gospel preaching* is the most useless, if not the most mischievous: a dull, yea, or lively harangue, on the sufferings of Christ, or salvation by faith, without strongly inculcating holiness. I see, more and more, that this tends to drive holiness out of the world."

The following is from the large minutes, page 318, vol. 8, of the new edition of Wesley's Works.

"Ques. 38. Have not some of us been led off from practical preaching by what is called *preaching Christ*?

"Ans. Indeed we have. The most effectual way of preaching Christ, is to preach him in all his offices, and to declare his law as well as his Gospel, both to believers and unbelievers. Let us strongly and closely insist upon inward and outward holiness, in all its branches."

The following extract is from a sermon in vol. 5, page 461.

"It is our part thus to preach Christ, by preaching all things whatsoever he hath revealed. We may indeed, without blame, yea, and with a peculiar blessing from God, declare the love of our Lord Jesus Christ..............we may expatiate upon the grace of God in Christ, 'reconciling the world unto himself:' we may, at proper opportunities, dwell upon his praise, as 'bearing the iniquities of us all, as wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities, that by his stripes we might be healed:'—but still we should not preach Christ according to his word, if we were wholly to confine ourselves to this: we are not ourselves clear before God, unless we proclaim him in *all* his offices. To preach Christ, as a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, is to preach him, not only as our great High Priest,———as 'reconciling us to God by his blood,' and 'ever living to make intercession for us;—but likewise as the prophet of the Lord, who of God is made unto us wisdom;' who, by his word and spirit, is with us always, 'guiding us into all truth.' Yea, and as remaining King for ever; as giving laws to all whom he has bought with his blood; as restoring those to the image of God, whom he had first reinstated in his favour, as reigning in all believing hearts, until he has 'subdued all things to himself,' until he hath utterly cast out all sin, and brought in everlasting righteousness."

The following extract, the last we shall quote at present, is from a sermon in vol. 5, page 449, &c. on makvoid the law through faith.

It may not be amiss to remind the reader again, that by *preaching the law*, John Wesley still means *preaching the precepts of Christ*, as in the foregoing letter: and that by *making void* the law, he means frustrating the ends for which the moral precepts of the Gospel are given.

THE EXTRACT.

"I. 1. Let us, first inquire, which are the most usual ways of making void the law through faith? Now the way for a preacher to make it all void at a stroke, is, not to preach it at all. This is just the same thing as to blot it out of the oracles of God. More especially, when it is done with design; when it is made a rule, not to preach the law; and the very phrase, 'a preacher of the law,' is used as a term of reproach, as though it meant little less than an enemy to the Gospel.

"2. All this proceeds from the deepest ignorance of the nature, properties, and use of the law; and proves, that those who act thus, either know not Christ,—are utter strangers to living faith,—or, at least, that they are but babes in Christ, and, as such, 'unskilled in the word of righteousness.'

"3. Their grand plea is this: that preaching the Gospel, that is, according to their judgment, the speaking of nothing but the sufferings and merits of Christ, answers all the ends of the law. But this we utterly deny. It does not answer the very first end of the law, namely, the convincing men of sin; the awakening those who are still asleep on the brink of hell. There may have been here and there an exempt case. One in a thousand may have been awakened by the Gospel: but this is no general rule: the ordinary method of God is, to convict sinners by the law, and that only. The Gospel is not the means which God hath ordained, or which our Lord himself used, for this end. We have no authority in Scripture for applying it thus, nor any ground to think it will prove effectual. Nor have we any more ground to expect this, from the nature of the thing. 'They that be whole,' as our Lord himself observes, 'need not a physician, but they that are sick.' It is absurd, therefore, to offer a physician to them that are whole, or that at least imagine themselves so to be. You are first to convince them that they are sick; otherwise they will not thank you for your labour. It is equally absurd to offer Christ to them whose heart is whole, having never yet been broken. It is, in the proper sense, 'casting pearls before swine.' Doubtless 'they will trample them under foot;' and it is no more than you have reason to expect, if they also 'turn again and rend you.'

"4. 'But although there is no command in Scripture, to offer Christ to the careless sinner, yet are there not scriptural precedents for it?' I think not: I know not any. I believe you cannot produce one, either from the four Evangelists, or the Acts of the Apostles. Neither can you prove this to have been the practice of any of the Apostles, from any passage in all their writings.

"5. 'Nay, does not the Apostle Paul say, in his former Epistle to the Corinthians, 'We preach Christ crucified?' (i. 23.) and in his latter, 'We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord?'' (iv. 5.)

"We consent to rest the cause on this issue; to tread in his steps, to follow his example. Only preach you just as Paul preached, and the dispute is at an end.

"For although we are certain he preached Christ in as perfect a manner as the very chief of the Apostles, yet who preached the law more than St. Paul? Therefore he did not think the Gospel answered the same end.

"6. The very first sermon of St. Paul's which is recorded, concludes in these words: 'By him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses. Beware, therefore, lest that come upon you which is spoken of in the Prophets, Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish. For I work a work in your days, a work which you will in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you.' (Acts xiii. 39, &c.) Now it is manifest, all this is preaching the law, in the sense wherein you understand the term; even although great part of, if not all, his hearers, were either Jews or religious proselytes, (verse 43,) and, therefore, probably many of them, in some degree at least, convinced of sin already. He first reminds them, that they could not be justified by the law of Moses, but only by faith in Christ; and then severely threatens them with the judgments of God, which is, in the strongest sense, preaching the law.

"7. In his next discourse, that to the Heathens at Lystra, (xiv. 15, &c.) we do not find so much as the name of Christ: the whole purport of it is, that they should 'turn from those vain idols, unto the living God.' Now confess the truth. Do not you think, if you had been there, you could have preached much better than he? I should not wonder if you thought too, that his preaching so ill occasioned his being so ill-treated; and that his being stoned was a just judgment upon him for not preaching Christ!

"8. To the gaoler indeed, when 'he sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?' he immediately said, 'believe on the Lord Jesus Christ:' (Acts xvi. 29, &c.;) and in the case of one so deeply convinced of sin, who would not have said the same? But to the men at Athens you find him speaking in a quite different manner; reproving their superstition, ignorance, and idolatry; and strongly moving them to repent, from the consideration of a future judgment, and of the resurrection from the dead. (xvii. 24—31.) Likewise when Felix sent for Paul, on purpose that he might 'hear him concerning the faith in Christ;' instead of preaching Christ in your sense, (which would probably have caused the governor, either to mock, or to contradict and blaspheme,) 'he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come,' till Felix (hardened as he was) 'trembled.' (xxiv. 24, 25.) Go thou, and tread in his steps. Preach Christ to the careless sinner, by reasoning 'of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come!'

"9. If you say, 'but he preached Christ in a different manner in his Epistles:' I answer, (1.) He did not there preach at all; not in that sense wherein we speak: for preaching, in our present question, means speaking before a congregation. But, waving this, I answer, (2.) His Epistles are directed, not to unbelievers, such as those we are now speaking of, but 'to the saints of God,' in Rome, Corinth, Philippi, and other places. Now, unquestionably, he would speak more of Christ to these, than to those who were without God in the world. And yet, (3.) Every one of these is full of the law, even the Epistles to the Romans and the Galatians; in both of which he does what you term 'preaching the law,' and that to believers, as well as unbelievers.

"10. From hence it is plain, you know not what it is to preach Christ, in the sense of the Apostle. For doubtless St. Paul judged himself to be preaching Christ, both to Felix, and at Antioch, Lystra, and Athens: from whose example every thinking man must infer, that not only the declaring the love of Christ to sinners, but also the declaring that he will come from heaven in flaming fire, is, in the Apostle's sense, preaching Christ; yea, in the full scriptural meaning of the word. To preach Christ, is to preach what he hath revealed, either in the Old or New Testament; so that you are then as really preaching Christ, when you are saying, 'The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the people that forget God,' as when you are saying, 'Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!'

"11. Consider this well;—that to preach Christ, is to preach all things that Christ hath spoken; all his promises; all his threatenings and commands; all that is written in his book; and then you will know how to preach Christ, without making void the law.

"12. 'But does not the greatest blessing attend those discourses wherein we peculiarly preach the merits and sufferings of Christ?'

"Probably when we preach to a congregation of mourners, or of believers, these will be attended with the greatest blessing; because such discourses are peculiarly suited to their state. At least, these will usually convey the most comfort. But this is not always the greatest blessing. I may sometimes receive a far greater blessing by a discourse that cuts me to the heart, and humbles me to the dust. Neither should I receive that comfort, if I were to preach or to hear no other discourses but on the sufferings of Christ. These, by constant repetition, would lose their force, and grow more and more flat and dead, till at length they would become a dull round of words, without any spirit, or life, or virtue. So that thus to preach Christ must, in process of time, make void the Gospel as well as the law."—*Sermon on making Void the Law, &c.*

If it were needful, we might occupy the whole of this number with proofs from the Sacred Writings, of the correctness of Wesley's sentiments on this subject, but what has been already given is sufficient for the present. The extracts already given, and the remarks with which they are accompanied, may enable our readers to see the folly of the ceaseless outcry which is raised in almost all quarters about *Evangelical preaching*, and *preaching Christ?* The phrases *Evangelical preaching*, and *preaching Christ*, are used in the present day, in the same unscriptural sense in which the phrase *Gospel preaching* was used in the days of Wesley: they are almost invariably used by preachers and writers to mean an almost constant dwelling upon the sufferings and death of Christ as an atonement for sin, and on justification by faith, and the divinity of Christ. When they say a man's preaching is not *evangelical*, they do not, generally speaking, mean that it is not according to the doctrine of Christ, but that it is not constantly full of those few particular doctrines: and when they say a man does not sufficiently preach Christ, their meaning is not that he does not preach Christ's doctrines, Christ's example, and Christ's precepts; but that he does not dwell perpetually on Christ's person and propitiatory sacrifice. We say the foregoing extracts and observations may enable our readers to see how little regard is to be paid to the noise which is made in certain quarters about *preaching Christ*, and how little credit is due to their statements, when they attribute revivals of religion to that partial and irrational manner of handling the Gospel, which has so long and so falsely gone under the name of *Gospel* or *Evangelical preaching*.

We have no doubt but that all the good that is done by preachers throughout the world is done by *truly evangelical preaching*, or by *preaching Christ* in the sense in which *Wesley* says Christ should be preached, and in the sense in which the Apostle Paul preached Christ. But *this* way of preaching Christ,—*this* kind of Evangelical preaching, is quite a different thing from what persons generally mean by preaching Christ, and Evangelical preaching. It is not Evangelical preaching *properly so called* which we dislike, but that irrational, unscriptural, antinomian way of preaching, which misguided men have ignorantly called Evangelical preaching. Our readers may also see from the foregoing extracts and observations, what little right our opponents have to boast of the name of Wesley, or to charge us with degenerating from sound Wesleyan theology. *They* are the men that have wandered from Wesley; while we have maintained his principles inviolate. We do not call Wesley our master; one is our master, even Christ: still it affords us pleasure to find, that while we follow the Saviour, we are favoured with the company and countenance of Wesley. We do not call Wesley master; and yet we do not hesitate in saying, that we know not of any man among modern writers on religion, in whose works we find a stricter or fuller agreement on most subjects, both in spirit and in sentiment, with the teachings of Christ, than in the writings of John Wesley.

ANSWER TO QUESTIONS ON REQUITING INJURIES, EXECUTING CIVIL LAWS, &c.

Dearly Beloved in the Lord,

Will you have the kindness, through the medium of your Investigator, to give me your free opinion on the following inquiries?—

Is an individual, who stands connected with the church of Christ, to be justified in requiting an injury done unto him, when the injury extends to the loss of his property or health, or to the endangering of his life, especially when his country shall be benefitted by the offender being brought to justice? Would not the infliction of a punishment, according to his crime, be a preventative of crime in others? Would a Christian violate God's law, by enforcing the laws of his country in such cases? A Subscriber.

Ans. 1. We believe that an individual, who professes the religion of Christ, is not to be justified in requiting an injury, however serious the injury may be. The New Testament forbids the requital of injuries of all kinds, over and over again. "Recompence to no man evil for evil." "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore, if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good." Rom. xii. 17, 19, &c. "Ye have heard," saith Christ, "that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: but I say unto you that ye resist (or requite) not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also." It would be easy to quote a hundred passages of the same import with the above, all prohibiting revenge and retaliation, all inculcating meekness and mercy, and all requiring the forgiveness of injuries. It is plain therefore, that a member of the church of Christ is *not* justified in requiting an injury.

2. It is also worthy of remark that Christ never requited any injury himself. "When he was reviled, he reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously." He left the work of *requiting injuries* to his Heavenly Father; and we are to tread in his steps.

You suppose the injury done to extend to the loss of property, or of health, or to the endangering of life; and you ask whether in *that* case, the injury ought not to be requited.

I answer; the New Testament makes no difference between great injuries and small ones; it forbids us to avenge ourselves, or to requite evil, without any limitations or exceptions. It makes no difference whether we be injured in property, or health, or life; we are to "recompense to no man evil for evil;" we are to forgive men their trespasses, as we would have our Heavenly Father to forgive us. Christ supposes a case in which a may is robbed of property, but he commands just the opposite of retaliation. "If a man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also." And in his own case he was nailed to the cross, yet so far was he from requiting the injury, that he prayed for his murderers, saying, "Father, forgive them; they know not what they do."

Question. "But may we not requite an injury by bringing a man to justice according to law?"

Ans. 1. The New Testament makes no distinction between requiting an injury according to law, and requiting an injury privately or personally. Requiting injuries is forbidden without any limitation or exception.

2. Again, law and justice are very different things. You can never be certain of requiting a man, or of bringing him to justice, by prosecuting him according to law. What is called "bringing men to *justice*," is often bringing them to *injustice*. A man that is famishing steals from you a loaf of bread, and by prosecut-

ing him according to law, you get him hanged: would this be justice? Yet this was *called* justice, and it was according to the law of the land, some years age. And even now, if you were to prosecute a man for an injury, it is probable, that instead of causing justice to be executed, you would cause greater injustice to be committed against your offending brother, than he had committed against you. And I have no more right to injure a man by means of the law, than I have to injure him privately.

3. If all civil laws were *just*, I should still not be justified as a Christian in seeking to have them executed. The law which we have already quoted, "An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth," is just, and yet Christ forbids us to act on that principle. Many imagine that what Christ forbids is not *legal* retaliation, but *private* retaliation only; but this is manifestly an error. Christ says, "Ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, An eye for an eye," &c. But this was not said "by them of old time" in reference to *private* revenge, but in reference to the public execution of the law. *Private* retaliation was not allowed by the law of Moses. The law to which Christ refers, is in Lev. xxiv. 19, &c. "And if a man cause a blemish in his neighbour; as he hath done, so shall it be done to him; breach for breach, eye for eye, tooth for tooth." This law did not authorise any one to requite an injury privately or personally, by his own hand, but only publicly, by means of the judges and executors of the law. When therefore Christ abrogates this law, and commands us not to resist (or requite) evil, it is plain that he as much forbids us to requite an injury by an appeal to the law, as by an appeal to our own arm.

Ques. "But might we not benefit our country by bringing an offender to justice?"

Ans. 1. Our business is to obey Christ's law, and leave the consequences with God. We are not to do evil that good may come.

2. We are not always able to judge what particular thing will benefit a country. Men are often mistaken as to what will benefit a country. God alone understands the interests of a country perfectly. In fact, the welfare of a country depends entirely on the blessing of God, and nothing can benefit a country but obedience to God's will.

3. Whatever good we might do to a country by the requital of injuries according to law, we have no doubt but we should do much greater good to a country, by an example of love and forgiveness of injuries in obedience to the laws of Christ. While we regard civil law as a great blessing compared with complete lawlessness, we regard it as a poor miserable thing compared with the religion of Christ. We would not have civil law supplanted by anarchy, but simply rendered unnecessary by men being brought to obey the infinitely superior laws of the Gospel. And nothing tends more to bring people to obey the laws of the Gospel, than our own example of obedience to those laws.

Ques. "Would not the infliction of a punishment on an offender according to his crime, prevent crime in others?"

Ans. Perhaps it might, and perhaps it might not. In some cases the punishment inflicted on offenders is itself a crime. Men are sometimes punished with transportation and with death for offences comparatively light. A woman was hung some time ago for stealing a loaf of bread, to save her hungry, crying children from starvation. What effect would the infliction of such a penalty, on such an offender as that poor woman, be likely to have on people's minds? Would not such punishments tend to make men hate the laws? And it is in vain to expect them to keep laws which they hate. Perhaps most of the penalties attached to the transgression of human laws are severe, and tend, when inflicted, to harden men, and make them sin with vengeance, rather than to soften and reform them.

2. Some of the laws of our country are downright wicked; they forbid things which are good, and command things which are evil: and I should consider myself bound to abstain from prosecuting any one at law on this account. If I prosecute a person for transgressing one civil law, another may prosecute me for transgressing another civil law, and

what would be the consequence? I might be taken and shut up in prison to the end of my earthly life. There are many laws of the land that I cannot obey; and it would not look consistent, in my view, to punish a man for transgressing a law of the land, while I myself transgressed as many of the laws of the land as I believed at variance with the laws of Christ. Till very lately there was a law that forbade people to meet for prayer to the number of more than five, on pain of fine and transportation for life. Could I have any thing to do with a set of laws in which such laws as those were to be found? I can have nothing to do with any laws but the laws of Christ. So far as I can obey the laws of the land, without disobeying the laws of Christ, so far I consider myself bound to obey them: but in all cases in which the laws of men are at variance with the laws of Christ, I consider myself bound to *disobey* them. The law of the land requires me, under certain circumstances, to *swear*, or to take oaths, while Christ tells me not to swear at all: the law of the land requires me, under certain circumstances, to *fight*, or in other words, to plunder and kill my enemies; but the law of Christ tells me to love my enemies, and not to resist evil, but to overcome evil with good. In all such cases as these, I must disobey the laws of my country, or else sin against God.

Question. "Would a Christian be violating the laws of God, by enforcing the laws of his country?"

Ans. He would certainly be violating the laws of God by enforcing *some* of the laws of our country; for many of the laws of our country are opposed to the laws of God: and even in enforcing those laws of our country which are just, by legal sanctions, he would, in my judgment, be acting at variance with the principles of the Gospel. The Gospel teaches its disciples to seek to reform men by instructing them, by setting them a good example, and by doing them good; and these are the only means, I believe, of reforming our fellow-men, which, as Christians, we can consistently employ. "We war not after the flesh." "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal." It is my belief, that Christians have better work than using *force*. The business of a Christian is to seek the regeneration of the world by teaching the truth, by setting a good example, and by prayer to God. Leave those to use force, who know no better plan; but those who have been taught by Christ, are called to pursue "a more excellent way."

SAYINGS OF THE FATHERS.

AN ANCIENT FATHER ON NON-RESISTANCE.

"CONCERNING patience, submission, and meekness, these are our Master's rules. 'Whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also, and him that taketh away thy cloak, forbid not to take away thy coat also. Matt. v. 39, 40. Whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause, shall be in danger of hell fire; whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain. Matt. v. 22. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.' Verse 16. A Christian hand must by no means be lifted up in resistance; for Christ will not have his disciples like the rest of the world, but orders them to shine with a distinguishing patience and meekness, and to win men over from their sins by such gentle arts of conversion. And I could give you a proof of the influence of such bright examples from many converts among us, who, from men of violence and oppression, were transformed into quite another nature, perfectly overcome by the passive courage of their Christian neighbours, or by observing the new astonishing patience of such injured Christians as they chanced to travel with, or the experience they had of their fidelity in their dealings." —*Justin Martyr*, (A. D. 150.)

THE CHRISTIAN'S DEFENCE.

"THUS then while we are stretching forth our hands to our God, let your tormenting irons harrow our flesh; let your gibbets exalt us, or your fires lick up our bodies, or your swords cut off our heads, or your beasts tread us to earth. For a Christian upon his knees to his God, is in a posture of defence against all the evils you can crowd upon him." —*Tertullian*, (A. D. 200.)

TRUTH.

"TRUTH alone is the thing to be had in the highest honour, and to hold the first place in our affections, and the ancients are not to be followed one step further than they are followers of truth."—*Justin Martyr*, (A.D. 150.)

LOVE STRONGER THAN DEATH.

"IT is in our power at any time to escape your torments, by denying the faith when you question us about it; but we scorn to purchase life at the expense of a lie; for our souls are winged with the desire of a life of eternal duration and purity, of an immediate conversation with God the Father, and maker of all things; we are in haste to be confessing and finishing our faith, being fully persuaded that we shall arrive at this beatific state, if we approve ourselves to God by our works, and express by our obedience our passion for that divine life which is never interrupted by any clashing evil."—*Justin Martyr*, (A. D. 150.)

AN APOLOGY FOR CHRISTIANITY.

"BUT allowing our tenets to be as false and groundless presumptions as you would have them, yet I must tell you, that they are presumptions the world cannot be well without; if they are follies, they are follies of great use, because the believers of them, when under the dread of eternal pain, and the hope of everlasting pleasure, are under the strongest obligations possible to become the best of men. It can never therefore be a politic expedient to cry down doctrines for false and foolish, which it is every man's interest to presume true, it is upon no account advisable to condemn opinions so serviceable to the public."—*Tertullian*, (A. D. 200.)

ANECDOTES.

AN AGED HERMIT.

"FATHER," exclaimed a gay and thoughtless son of raillery, to an aged hermit who passed him barefoot, "you are in a very miserable condition, if there is not another world." "True, son," replied the old man, "but what is thy condition if there is?"

AN INDIAN BOY.

AT a meeting of a missionary society in Philadelphia, at which two Indian chiefs were present, and addressed a very large audience, the Rev. Mr. Finley, in the concluding part of his speech, related one or two very interesting anecdotes, to show the progress of the revival, and the depth of solid piety among the Wyandots. In one of his tours he took with him an Indian youth of zeal and piety. On setting out, he told him it was possible, when he got among sinful and wicked company, that he might forget his God, and again betake himself to the paths of folly and sin. "But," said he, calling him by his name, "I would rather preach your funeral sermon than see you depart from the paths of piety." They proceeded, and in their tour came to the house of a very wealthy merchant, where they remained for some time. The merchant had two or three clerks who were given to frolic, and were destitute of piety, and even seriousness. Into the room with these clerks the Indian boy was put to sleep. Before retiring to bed, he knelt down to pray. The others began their frolic with a design to disturb, if not torment him; but he heeded them not. This continued for some time: at length, one night when they were become so bad as to disturb him very much, the youth remonstrated, pointed out the wickedness of their conduct, and concluded by saying, that they were really worse than any Indian in all the Wyandot tribe of Upper Sandusky, observing, that Indians would be ashamed of such conduct, as they had more common sense, virtue, and piety. This appeal came home with keen conviction to the hearts of the young men. The effect was deep and lasting, and they became, through that reproof, the subjects of awakening and justifying grace through faith in Jesus Christ.

DR. GIFFORD.

As the late Rev. Dr. Gifford was one day showing the British Museum to some strangers, he was much shocked by the profane language of a young gentleman belonging to the party. Taking down an ancient copy of the Septuagint, he showed it to the youth; on which he exclaimed, "Oh! I can read this." "Then," said the doctor, "read that passage," pointing to the third commandment. The reproof went home to his conscience, and he immediately refrained from swearing.

A LADY.

A PRETENDED freethinker had been repeating a number of absurdities, to prove that men have no souls. The company were contented with staring at him, instead of replying. He addressed a lady, and asked her, with an air of triumph, what she thought of his philosophy. "It appears to me, sir," she replied, "that you have been employing a good deal of talent to prove yourself a beast."

THE UNITY OF THE CHURCH.

WE inserted, in a former number, some questions on Christian Union, with the intention of leading the way to a thorough investigation of the subject. By way of opening the question, we now give a very appropriate chapter from *Baxter's "Reasons for Christian Unity and Concord."* In succeeding numbers other artibles on this subject will be given. A useful article by N. G. is already in type.

1. *UNION AND CONCORD NOT TO BE DESPAIRED OF.*

"Some men having seen the Christian world so long in sects and contending parties, do think that there is no hope of unity and concord, and therefore that all should be left at liberty: and others think that there is no hope but on terms so wide as shall take such as Christ receiveth not, nor would have us receive.

"To think that Church union is impossible, is to deny that there is any church, and consequently any Christ. To think that necessary concord in communion is impossible, is so great a disparagement to the church, as tempteth men, by villifying it, to doubt of Christianity: for if Christians cannot live in unity of faith, and love, and converse, what is their Christianity? And such despair of concord will make men suspend all endeavours to attain it: for despair useth no means.

"And to take into the church of Christ such as want the essentials, and as Christ would not have received, is to corrupt his church, and bring in confusion, and such as will dishonour him, and will be more hurtful in the church than they would be without: like rebels in a kingdom, or mutineers in an army, or enemies in a family: the nearer the worse.

2. *THE SIN AND DANGER OF MAKING TOO MUCH NECESSARY TO CHURCH UNION AND COMMUNION.*

"Additions to Christ's terms are very perilous as well as diminution: when men will deny either Church entrance or communion to any that Christ would have received, because they come not up to certain terms which they or such as they devise. And though they think that Christ giveth them power to do thus, or that reason or necessity justifieth them, their error will not make them guiltless: imputing their error to Christ untruly, is no small aggravation of the sin.

"Nor is it a small fault to usurp a power proper to Christ: to make themselves lawgivers to his church without any authority given them by him: their ministry is another work.

"And it is dangerous pride to think themselves great enough, wise enough, and good enough, to come after Christ, and to amend his work, and do it better than he hath done.

"Much less when they hereby imply an accusation against him and his institutions, as if he had not done it well, but they must amend it, or all will be intolerable.

"And indeed man's work will be like man, weak, and faulty, and full of flaws, when God's work will be like God, the effect of all-sufficient power, wisdom, and love.

"And the merciful Lord and Saviour of the church, that came to take off heavy burdens and intolerable yokes, will not take it well to have men come after him, and as by his authority, to make his easy yoke more strait, and his light burden heavy, and to cast or keep out those that he hath redeemed, and doth receive, and to deal cruelly with those that he hath so dearly bought, and tenderly loveth.

"And indeed it is ofter for men's own interest and dominion, to keep up their power and honour of superiority, that men thus use the servants of Christ, than truly to keep clear the church, and to keep out the pollutors.

"But when it is done by too much strictness, and as for church-purity, yet this also hath its aggravations: for men so far to forget themselves that they are servants and not lords, sinners that have need themselves of mercy, unfit to be too forward to cast the first stone, to seem more wise and holy than Christ, is but specious offending him.

"And as spiritual privileges excel temporal, so is it an aggravated tyranny to deprive Christ's servants of benefits so precious, and so dearly bought. As it was not with silver and gold that we were redeemed, so neither for the enjoying of silver and gold. Communion with Christ, his body and blood, and his saints in his ordinances, is a blessing so great, that he that robs such of it that have right to it, may answer it dearlier than if he had robbed them of their purses. O what then hath the Roman usurper done that hath oft interdicted whole kingdoms of Christians the use of holy privileges and duties!

"Little do many men, that cry up faith, and orthodoxness, and catholicism, and obedience, and cry down heresy, schism, error, and disobedience, believe how much guilt lieth on their souls, and without repentance how terrible it will prove, to be charged with the cruelties which they have used to good Christians, in reproaching them, and casting them out of the church, and destroying them as heretics and schismatics, that should have been loved and honoured as saints. But some men cannot see by the light of the fire, till they come so near it as to be burned.

"These self-made or over-doing terms of church union and concord will prove the certainest engines of schism; and none are so heinous schismatics, as they that make unnecessary terms of union, and then call all schismatics that consent not to them. For, 1. These are the leaders of the disorder, when other sorts of schismatics usually are but followers. 2. These do it by law, which is of most extensive mischief, even to all that are subject to them, when others do it but by local practice, extending but to those that are about them, or the particular assemblies which they gather. 3. These make the schism unavoidable, when private seducers may be resisted: for it is not in the power of good men to bring their judgments to the sentiments of every or any dictator, or yet to go contrary to their judgments. *Illicitum stat pro impossibili.* 4. These aggravate the crime by pretending power from God, and fathering schism on so good a thing as government, and causing it as for unity itself. 5. They condemn themselves by crying down schism, while they unavoidably cause it.

"And this over-doing and making unnecessary terms, unavoidably involveth them in the guilt of persecution; and when they have begun it, they know not where to stop. Suppose they decree that none shall preach the Gospel, or assemble for holy communion in public worship, but those that subscribe, or swear, or promise, or profess, or do, somewhat accounted sinful by the persons commanded, and not necessary indeed, however esteemed by the imposer, (who yet perhaps calls it but indifferent.)* It is certain that no honest Christian will do that which he judgeth to be sin: It is certain that other men's confident talk will not make all men of their minds, to take all for lawful which they take for such: what then will the imposers do? They will make strict laws to punish severely all that disobey: for say they, Our commands must not be contemned, nor disobedience tolerated: so do the Papists as to the Trent oath, &c., so did Charles the Fifth, a while about the interim, and so many others. These laws then must be executed; the pastors must be cast out, the preachers silenced;* they still believe as Daniel did about praying, and the apostles about preaching, that God commandeth what men forbid, and it is a damnable sin to forsake their calling and duty, no less than sacrilege, and cruelty to souls, and deserting the church, and worship and cause of Christ: and the people will still believe that no man's prohibition can excuse them if they forsake God's public worship, and comply with sin. The prelates will say that all this is but error, wilfulness, and rebellion, and they can prove the contrary. Their words will not change the judgment of dissenters. The pastors and preachers then must be fined, imprisoned or banished for preaching, and the people for public worshipping God: when they are fined they will go on: when they are out of prison they will return to their work: nothing is left them to remedy it, but either perpetual imprisonment, banishment, or death. When that is done, more will still rise of the same mind, and continue the work that others were disabled to perform: and the prelates that cause this will be taken by the suffering people for thorns and thistles, and grievous wolves that devour the flocks, and the military ministers of the devil: the indifferent common people knowing their neighbours to be conscionable men of upright lives, will become of the same minds, and look on the persecutors as the enemies of good men, and of public peace, that do all this by pride and domination; the ungodly rabble of drunkards, profane swearers, adulterers, and such like, for the part hating godliness and strict living, will cry up the prelates, and triumph over the sufferers. And thus the land will be divided; the prelates and other prosecutors, with the dirty malignant rabble of the licentious, will make one party, and these will call themselves orthodox and the church: the sufferers, and all that pity them, and like them better than the persecutors, will be the other party. The conjunction of the debauched and malignant rabble, with the prelates and their party, will increase sober men's dissatisfaction to them, and make men take them for the patrons of impiety: and how sad a condition must such churches be in! to say nothing of the state concussions and diseases that usually follow. Whatever ignorant men may dream, these prognostics are most certain, as any man that can discern the effects in moral causes may see, and as history and sad experience prove to all men of reading, observation, and understanding.*

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* Or suppose they make a law that none shall have communion with them, or minister the truth among them, who will not subscribe a human creed which the imposers themselves believe to be not wholly true, or express his belief in some man's writings, which the imposers believe to contain things inconsistent with each other and with truth, or that will not remain so many years unmarried, or that will not lay up for themselves treasures on earth by subscribing money to some worldly fund, or that will not refuse to publish cheap useful books and tracts. Ed.

"And in pastors of the church this will be a double crime and shame; because, 1. It is their office to gather and edify Christ's flock, and not to scatter and afflict them. 2. Because they should most imitate Christ in tender bowels, gentleness, and long-suffering, bearing the lambs in their arms, and not breaking the bruised reed, nor quenching the smoking flax: nurses or mothers used not to kill their children for crying, nor to turn them out of doors because they are unclean, nor to cut their throats to make them swallow bigger morsels, instead of cutting their meat: much less to cast them off for obeying their *father* 3. Because it is supposed that they best know the will of Christ, and should be best acquainted with the ways of peace. And therefore should understand Rom. xiv and xv. 'Him that is weak in the faith receive; but not to doubtful disputations.' 'The kingdom of God is not meats and drinks, but righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost: and he that in these things serveth Christ, is acceptable to God, and approved of men;' that is, of wise and good men, but not of proud persecutors, Rom. xiv. 17, 18. Wherefore receive ye one another as Christ also received us to the glory of God.' Rom. xv. 7. If the people were schismatical, and inclined to fall in pieces, the guides and builders should solder and cement them, and as pillars and bases in the church, which is the house of the living God, (as Timothy is called), should bear them up that they fall not by division.

"In a word, whoever will impartially read church history, especially of the councils and popes, shall find that the self-conceited usurpation of proud prelates, imposing unnecessary devices of their own (professions or practices) on the churches, and this with proud and fierce impatience toward dissenters, and usurping a legislation which Christ never gave them, hath been the great cause of much of the hatred, schisms, persecutions, wars, rebellions against emperors and kings, false excommunications, interdicts, and the disgrace of Christianity, weakening of the church, and hindering the conversion of Jews and infidels, and been a chief granado, thunderbolt, or wild-fire, by which satan hath so much prospered in storming of the church."

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* This is exactly the course with religious denominations so far as their power goes.

* And the history of all sects proves the same though on a smaller scale.

VARIETIES.

The following extract from Finney, shows that human nature is the same on the other side of the Atlantic as on this:—

"The most violent opposition that I have ever seen manifested to any persons in my life, has been manifested by members of the church, and even by some ministers of the Gospel, towards those who, I believe, were among the most holy persons I ever knew. I have been shocked, and wounded beyond expression, at the almost fiendish opposition to such persons, that I have witnessed."—*Finney on Sanctification.*

J. WESLEY.

The late John Wesley once travelled in a stage coach with a young officer, who swore and uttered curses upon himself in almost every sentence, Mr. W. asked him if he had read the Common Prayer-book; for if he had, he might remember that collect beginning, "O God, who art ever more ready to hear than we are to pray, and art wont to give more than either we desire or deserve." The young gentleman, who had contracted a very common, but dispicably vulgar and sinful habit, had the good sense to make the application, and behave accordingly.

JOHN BROWN.

The late John Brown, of Haddington, once passing the Frith of Forth, between Leith and Kinghorn, had for a fellow-passenger a Highland nobleman. Mr B. observed with grief, that he frequently took the name of God in vain; but suspecting that to reprove him in the presence of the other passengers might tend only to irritate him, he forebore saying any thing till he reached the opposite shore. After landing, Mr. B. observing the nobleman walking alone, stepped up to him and said, "Sir, I was sorry to hear you swearing while on our passage. You know it is written, 'Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.'" The nobleman, taking off his hat, and bowing to Mr. B. made the following reply:—"Sir, I return you thanks for the reproof you have now given me, and shall endeavour to attend to it in future: but," added he, "had you said this to me while in the boat, I believe I should have run you through with my sword."

S. WESLEY.

Samuel Wesley, rector of Epworth, and father of the celebrated John Wesley, once went into a coffee-house in London, for some refreshment. There were several gentlemen in a box at the other end of the room, one of whom, an officer of the guards, swore dreadfully. The rector saw that he could not speak to him without much difficulty: he therefore desired the waiter to give him a glass of water. When it was brought, he said aloud, "Carry it to yon gentleman in the red coat, and desire him to wash his mouth after his oaths." The officer rose up in a fury; but the gentlemen in the box laid hold of him, one of them crying out, "Nay, colonel, you gave the first offence; you see the gentleman is a clergyman; you know it is an affront to swear in his presence." The officer was thus restrained, and Mr. Wesley departed.

Some years after, being again in London, and walking in St. James's Park, a gentleman joined him, who, after some conversation, inquired if he recollected having seen him before. Mr Wesley replied in the negative. The gentleman then called to his remembrance the scene at the coffee-house; and added, "Since that time, sir, I thank God, I have feared an oath: and as I have a perfect recollection of you, I rejoiced at seeing you, and could not refrain from expressing my gratitude to God and you." "A word spoken in season how good it is!"

THE IMITATION OF THE DIVINE GOODNESS.

PART SECOND.

"*Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.*"—LUKE vi. 36.

WE would now call your attention to some of those considerations which ought to stimulate us to imitate the Goodness of God.

1. We would observe, in the first place, that to resemble God,—to bear his image, and to imitate his goodness, was the end for which we were created. Man was made in God's image at first, and it was God's intention, so far as we can learn his mind from the Sacred Scriptures, that man should be a visible reflector of his glory, a living, moving exemplification of his unseen, unbounded, and eternal love. It is only so far, therefore, as we bear on our souls the image of God's love, and imitate in our lives his goodness to his creatures, that the end of our creation is answered. If we live not under the influence of love, we frustrate the great end of our existence, and so far bring to nought the wise and gracious purposes of our Great Creator. "Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father which is in Heaven is merciful."

2. Again, to restore us to the image of God, and so to fit us for imitating his goodness, is the design of the whole religion of Christ, and of the whole plan of redemption. Hence those who have experienced the salvation of the Gospel, are spoken of as having been renewed in righteousness and true holiness after the image of God, and as having been "created anew by Christ Jesus unto good works."* And they are accordingly exhorted to "Be followers [or imitators] of God as dear children ; and to walk in love as Christ also hath loved them, and given himself for them, an offering and a sacrifice to God, for a sweet smelling savour."† The precepts which Christ inculcated, the parables which he spoke, the doctrines which he taught, and the example which he exhibited, all tend to this one object, to destroy our natural selfishness, to fill us with love to God and love to man, and to bring us to spend our lives, and employ our powers, in doing good. The object and tendency of the doctrines of the Gospel are exhibited by the Apostle in one of his Epistles to the Corinthians. Comparing the revelations of the Gospel to a glass, he says, "We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord."‡

The end for which the Redeemer suffered and died,—the end for which he instituted his church, and shed down upon it the powerful influences of the Holy Spirit,—the end for which he gave Apostles, and Prophets, and Evangelists, and Pastors, and Teachers, was to make men partakers of the Divine Nature, and to bring them to live in the exercise of unceasing and unbounded love to their fellow-men. It is only therefore so far as we are thus filled with love, and brought thus to live and labour for the good of mankind, that the end of redemption is answered in us. It is only so far as we are delivered from our natural selfishness, and inspired with the benevolence of our Heavenly Father, that we are truly redeemed. The work of redemption is but very imperfectly understood by many. Great numbers speak of the work of redemption as if it consisted in little else than in procuring pardon for sin, and preserving us from hell ; and they look at Christ as little more than the world's High Priest, whose chief and almost only object was, by offering himself as a propitiation, to procure for man the pardon of his sins. The light in which the New Testament represents Christ and his work is very different. Christ is placed before us in the New Testament as the Teacher, the Ruler, and the Renovator of mankind, as well as their High Priest. Even his sufferings and death were intended to have an influence upon man's nature, as well as upon his condition ; and his blood is spoken of, not only as being a sacrifice to God, but as washing and cleansing the soul, as freeing it from its earthliness and selfishness, and imparting the purity and benevolence of the Divine nature. Christ came as the regenerator of man's nature, as the Creator of a new world. He came to destroy the works of the devil,—to make an end of sin,—to redeem us from our vain conversation,—to deliver us from this present evil world, and purify us unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works,—to make us *holy*, holy as God is holy,—and, in short, to diffuse through the souls of men the light, the purity, and tenderness of the Divine Being.

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* Col. iii. 9, 10. Eph. iv. 24. Eph. ii. 10.

† Eph. v. 1, 2.

‡ 2 Cor. iii. 18.

We have no right, therefore, to reckon ourselves saved by Christ, any further than we are saved from the pollutions of sin, and restored to the likeness of God. We have no right to call ourselves Christians, any farther than we are cured of our natural selfishness, and brought to be merciful as our Heavenly Father is merciful. To be a Christian is to be like Christ, and to be like Christ is to be like God, for Christ is "the image of God." To have in us the mind of Christ, and to walk as Christ also walked, is to have in us the mind, the benevolent nature, of God, and to be imitators of his love. If we have not this likeness to God in our souls, and if we do not thus imitate the goodness of God in our conduct, we are strangers to true religion, and the end of all that Christ has said, and done, and suffered for us, is frustrated; the plan of redemption and all the arrangements of the Christian dispensation, so far as we are concerned, are in vain. "Be ye therefore merciful as your Father also is merciful."

3. To be like God, and to imitate Him in the exercise of his goodness, constitutes our perfection. This is our true greatness and glory. Man's worth and excellence are not to be reckoned according to the strength of his understanding, the extent of his knowledge, or his powers of speech, much less according to the beauty and vigour of his outward form; but according to the purity, the fervour, and the activity of his benevolent affections. However active and powerful may be a man's intellect, however vast his stores of knowledge, however great his powers of speech, and however vigorous or comely in body he may be, he is still but a heap of ruins, if destitute of love. "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing." 1 Cor. xiii. 1 2. But they whose souls are inspired with ardent and unbounded love, and whose ceaseless endeavour it is to promote the welfare of their fellow-creatures, are great, though but children in other matters. Their worth surpasses all other worth; they stand at the head of the whole creation; they are the loveliest of all God's works.

Hence the Redeemer speaks of perfection, and of the imitation of the divine goodness, as one thing. In the words of our text he says, "Be ye *merciful* as your Father also is merciful," but when he inculcates the same principle in the Sermon on the Mount, Matt. v. 48, he says, "Be ye therefore *perfect*, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." The perfection of man is the perfection of love. If, therefore, you would rise to true greatness; if you would attain true worth and excellence; if you would be clothed with true glory, and take your place in the highest rank of beings, "Be merciful, as your Father which is in heaven is merciful."

4. It is only in resembling God, and in imitating his goodness, that we can find our true, our full, and our eternal happiness. Happiness is not to be found in wealth: a man may have wealth without end, and yet know nothing of true happiness. Some of the wealthiest men in the world are among the most miserable beings in existence. Nor is happiness to be found in rank, or fame, or in any earthly good. A man may be born a prince, he may be nursed and reared in palaces, he may wear the crowns of a hundred empires, and receive homage in a hundred different languages, and yet be miserable. He may do what the world may call great things, and fill with the fame of his exploits a hundred lands, and yet be miserable. He may have a healthy body; he may have a comely form; he may be loved, and courted, and admired; he may have at his bidding all the indulgences which

flesh and fancy can covet or enjoy, and yet be miserable. A man's happiness does not consist either in the abundance of the things which he possesseth, or in the freedom with which he indulgeth himself: it consists in the state of his mind, and in the relation in which he stands to God, and to the eternal world. Happiness and indulgence are very different things. Those who indulge themselves most, generally enjoy the least; while those who most deny themselves, out of respect to the will of God, and to the welfare of their fellow-men, enjoy the most. The man that lives to indulge his flesh and to please his fleshly mind, enjoys nothing truly; while the man who denies himself of fleshly pleasures, that he may please his Maker and benefit his fellow-men, enjoys every thing.

The imitation of the divine goodness contributes to our happiness in various ways. The exercise of love is itself a pleasure. Love is a pleasant affection, full of delightful, happy feeling. The love of a mother for her children, the love of children for their parents, the mutual love of brothers and of sisters, the love of friends, and more especially that deeper, higher, and more devoted love, from which all other domestic loves derive their origin and strength; that love which perfects friendship, and unites and mingles in one ardent flame the souls of man and woman, when joined by God in bonds of honourable marriage; all are so many springs and fountains of delight. But that love which yields the fullest measures of delight, is that pure and heavenly affection which the Saviour inculcates, when he commands us "to be merciful as our Father which is in heaven is merciful." And the pleasures which flow from this fountain never fail. Other fountains of delight are often dried up, and at times the streams which flow from them are turned to grief and anguish; but this fountain pours forth its streams for ever, and the streams increase in sweetness, and become more copious, world without end.

Nothing yields such pure and full delight as ardent and unbounded love. Love is, in fact, the measure of felicity both on earth and in heaven. Those beings that excel in holy love, excel in happiness; and those that are most estranged from love, are the most miserable. The most happy of all beings is God, and He is the most loving of all beings; and in proportion as we resemble him in love, shall we resemble him in felicity. The most miserable of all beings are the spirits of darkness, and they are the farthest removed from love. In proportion as we resemble God in love, in such proportion shall we resemble him in felicity; and in proportion as we resemble the spirits of darkness in selfishness and malignity, in such proportion shall we resemble them in misery. The perfect and ceaseless exercise of love, is the perfection of felicity. Never till we are freed from malignity and selfishness, and filled with pure and ardent love to all mankind, shall we enjoy those pure and full delights for which our souls were created. But let malignity and selfishness expire,—let love to God and love to man fill our whole soul,—let us be merciful as our Father which is in heaven is merciful,—let us in all our plans and labours aim at promoting, to the utmost of our ability, the welfare of all our fellow-men, and we shall enjoy the bliss of heaven itself.

The exercise of benevolence promotes our happiness in other ways. It keeps us from innumerable evils. Two of the greatest causes of misery are idleness and intemperance. Most of the miseries with which some classes of society are tormented, come from one or another form of these vices. The exercise of the benevolence inculcated by the Saviour would entirely destroy those causes of misery. It would find us abundance of employment, both for the body and the mind, and employment of the right kind; and it would take up all our time and treasures, and leave us neither leisure nor resources for intemperate indulgences.

The exercise of Christian benevolence raises us higher in the favour of God. The benevolent are God's favourites, and they are his only favourites. God cannot love those who are selfish, and the selfish soul that dreams of his favour is under a dreadful delusion. There is nothing in the universe that God loathes and abhors so much as selfishness and malignity. Satan himself might as well imagine himself in the favour of God, as the man who loves not his brother. But on the souls of those who bear his image, and who, in imitation of his goodness, devote themselves and all their wealth and powers to promote the welfare of their fellow men, God looks with love unutterable. And the more ardent their love, and the more abundant their benevolent labours and sacrifices in the cause of human happiness, the more abundantly does God delight in them, and the more abundant evidences does he afford them of his love. He makes their peace to flow as a river, and their blessedness to abound as the waves of the sea.

The happiness of those who imitate the divine goodness is increased by the *success* of their labours. Every evil they are enabled to remove, every benefit they are enabled to bestow, every want they are enabled to supply, every error they are enabled to correct, every drunkard they are enabled to reclaim, and every sinner they are enabled to convert, gives them fresh joy. As the mother when her lost babe is restored to her, and as the father when his prodigal son returns home, are filled with unspeakable delight, so it is with the truly benevolent, when they see men brought from their guilt and wretchedness, and made happy in the enjoyment of religion. And when they see the light of truth spreading, through their instrumentality, over the dark nations, and the softening influences of religion diffusing themselves through the habitations of cruelty,—when they see whole tribes casting away their idols at once, and beginning to worship the one true God, and exchanging their pollutions and cruelties for the purity and tenderness of the Gospel, their joy is unbounded.

And the truly benevolent rejoice in the good that is done through the instrumentality of others. If men are blessed, it is enough for them, whoever be the instrument. They look on all who labour for the good of others, as their brethren; they look, in fact, on all the children of men as their brethren, and every one's happiness is their happiness. They have a share in all the joy they see or hear of, throughout the whole universe of God.

And they look forward to the time when their joy shall be full. They expect, ere long, to be called to take their places in the worlds above, and to mingle in the society of heaven. They expect to be favoured with the company of Prophets and Apostles, of reformers and martyrs, and of the multitudes of holy, loving souls, that have sighed and toiled in the cause of God and human happiness in every age and country. They expect to enjoy the presence and the friendship of the Saviour, and to live in fellowship with him for ever. They expect to understand the mysteries of Providence, and to be enraptured with clearer and fuller revelations of God's goodness, world without end. They expect to be admitted into closer fellowship with God,—to be favoured with more abundant measures of wisdom and power,—to be employed by God in higher ways and on a vaster scale, in carrying out his plans of boundless and eternal love. They expect "fulness of joy, and pleasures for evermore:" "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." And their expectation shall not be cut off. God will raise them to the worlds above; he will enrich them with its pleasures, and he will open to them fresh worlds of light and blessedness for ever and ever. If ye wish for those high and eternal enjoyments, "be merciful as your Father who is in heaven is merciful."

5. Again, it is to assist us in thus imitating the goodness of God, that all our powers and resources are given to us. Our powers both of mind and body, and all our property and influence are the gifts of God, and they are entrusted to us on purpose that we may employ them in the service of our fellow-men. To employ them for purposes of foolish or selfish gratification, is to grieve God, and, so far as in us lies, to frustrate the purposes of his love. It is only while we employ our talents for God in doing good to mankind, that our talents can be rendered a blessing to ourselves. If suffered to be idle, or if spent in sin and folly, they will become curses to us, and bring on us eternal miseries.

6. The law of love is the law of all God's universe, and on its observance depends the welfare of every thing that God has made. So far as this law is broken, the world is subjected to disorder and misery; so far as this law is observed, the world is blessed with order and happiness. All the darkness, and disorder, and wretchedness in existence, may be traced to the want of benevolence, or to its limited and imperfect exercise. If men would duly cultivate the spirit of love, and be merciful as their Father which is in heaven is merciful, there is not an evil that afflicts the world but what might be speedily brought to a close. A great part of the world is harrassed and torn in pieces by wars; and millions upon millions of our fellow-men are crushed and tormented by slavery. The greater part of the nations are kept down by oppression, and countless multitudes are burdened and bowed down by excessive toil, and afflicted and distressed with want. There are countless multitudes that are without habitations, or that have habitations scarce fit for the brutes. Great portions of our large towns are little else than vast masses of filth and wretchedness; and even in the country, though appearances are not so bad, there are numberless cases of deep and heart-rending distress. Trade is bad, and it appears to be continually growing worse. Commercial panics tread on each other's heels, shaking all ranks, and thousands are every year thrown down from circumstances of comfort and plenty, into want and beggary. Fraud and injustice mix themselves to such a fearful extent with social intercourse, that confidence is almost destroyed, and the simple and unsuspecting make themselves a prey. Even the most prosperous nations on earth are in perplexity, and fearfulness takes hold of men in highest stations. Tears are shed, and sighs are heard on every hand; and the earth is still a vale of tears, and much of it a field of blood. Over a great part of the world hang the thick clouds of Pagan darkness, hiding from the miserable inhabitants all knowledge of God, and all prospects of blessedness in the world to come. Cruel superstitions and abominable idolatries prevail among them, and fill their souls with terrors, and their lives with pain. How are these evils to be remedied? How are the oppressions and wars, the wants and the miseries of mankind to be brought to an end? Some think that better forms of government would remedy those evils, and others think that the advancement of philosophy and the general spread of knowledge would put things right, while others, driven by their hatred of the truth to madness, dream that the world is to be regenerated and made happy by the overthrow of religion, and by the universal prevalence of licentiousness and infidelity. They are all wrong. The simple remedy for the miseries of the world is love. Let love be cherished and exercised as it ought, and it would rectify the disorders of the world at once. Let men be merciful as their Father which is in heaven is merciful, and war, and slavery, and oppression, and fraud, and want, and murderous toil would be no more; and freedom and peace, and plenty and joy would bless the whole family of men. If all the inhabitants of this land were to begin to be merciful as our Father which is in heaven is merciful, our country would become a perfect paradise. And if we were to continue to be thus merciful, the light and blessings of salvation would go forth to the ends of the earth. The darkness of paganism would pass away as a cloud; the millions of our race that are enslaved by cruel superstitions and abominable idolatries, might be blessed with holy liberty and joy, and the light and blessings of the Gospel might be placed within the reach of every soul of man.

There is nothing but the universal prevalence of holiness necessary, to make earth one vast and glorious paradise. There is nothing but the universal prevalence of holy love, accompanied with vigorous faith, necessary to bring down to earth the joy of heaven itself. If we wish for a happy world, let holy, godlike love be the ruling principle in our souls—and let labours of benevolence be the great business of our life. Let us be merciful as our Father which is in heaven is merciful.

7. Again, the exercise of benevo-

lence, in imitation of the Divine Being, will form our employment, our glory, and our felicity, for ever and ever. Heaven is not a place of inactivity; nor have we any reason to expect that our blessedness in heaven will be a blessedness of ease and indolence. The angels are represented in Scripture, as employed in carrying out the benevolent purposes and plans of the Almighty; and for any thing that we can learn, their high and holy employment constitutes their bliss. And we have reason to believe, that this will be the case with ourselves. Christ will not take our talents away from us when we enter heaven: he will give us more: he will not dismiss us from his employment, but employ us on a larger scale, and in a higher sphere. After having found us faithful over a *few* things, he will make us rulers over *many* things. He will admit us to a share of his own glory; he will welcome us to a participation in his own joy; and to co-operate with him in carrying forward his plans of eternal and unbounded goodness will form a portion of our blessedness, world without end.

We leave these observations with you. We beseech you to lay the words of our Saviour to heart, and to reduce them faithfully to practice. Let love to God, and love to man, fill your whole soul; and let labours of benevolence fill your whole life. Let your time, and property, and influence, without reserve, be consecrated to God for the service of mankind. Labour to be like God. Aspire after that glory and perfection, for which you were created and redeemed. Rest not till your soul becomes one holy flame of love; rest not till your life reflects, in all its tenderness and glory, the benevolence of your Heavenly Father. For the sake of your Saviour, who died for you; for the sake of a dark and miserable world, that is languishing and dying for want of your help; for the sake of yourselves, that you may live a happy life, and die a happy death, and enjoy the happiness of heaven for ever, we beseech you, "Be ye merciful as your Father which is in heaven is merciful."

THE CIRCULAR EPISTLE OF THE CHURCH OF SMYRNA, ON THE MARTYRDOM OF ST. POLYCARP.

The Church of God which is at Smyrna, to the Church of God which is at Philadelphia; and to all the other Assemblies of the Holy Catholic Church, in every place; mercy, peace, and love from God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, be multiplied.

I. We have written to you, brethren, both of what concerns the other martyrs, but especially the blessed Polycarp, who by his sufferings put an end to the persecution; setting as it were, his seal to it. For almost all things that went before were done, that the Lord might show us from above, a martyrdom truly such as became the Gospel. For he expected to be delivered up; even as the Lord also did, that we should become the followers of his example: considering not only what is profitable for ourselves, but also for our neighbours' advantage. For it is the part of a true and perfect charity, to desire, not only that a man's self should be saved, but also all the brethren.

II. The sufferings then of all the other martyrs, were blessed and generous; which they underwent according to the will of God. For so it becomes us, who are more religious than others, to ascribe the power and ordering of all things unto Him. And indeed who can chuse but admire the greatness of their mind, and that admirable patience, and love of their Master, which then appeared in them? Who, when they were so flead with whipping, that the frame and structure of their bodies were laid open to their very inward veins and arteries, nevertheless endured it. And when all that beheld them, pitied and lamented them; yet they showed so great a generosity of mind, that not one of them let so much as a sigh, or a groan, escape them: plainly showing that those Holy Martyrs of Christ, at the very same time that they were thus tormented, were absent from the body; or rather, that the Lord stood by them, and conversed with them. Wherefore, being supported by the grace of Christ, they despised all the torments of the world; by the sufferings of an hour, redeeming themselves from everlasting punishment. For this cause, even the fire of their cruel and barbarous executioners seemed cold to them; whilst they hoped thereby to escape that fire which is eternal, and shall never be extinguished: and beheld with the eyes of faith, those good things which are reserved for them that endure to the end; which neither ear has heard, nor eye seen, nor have they entered into the heart of man. But to them they were now revealed by the Lord; as being no longer men, but already become angels. In like manner, those who were condemned to the beasts, and kept a long time in prison, underwent many cruel torments: being forced to lie upon sharp spikes laid under their bodies; and tormented with divers other sorts of punishments; that so, if it were possible, the tyrant, by the length of their sufferings, might have brought them to deny Christ.

III. For, indeed, the Devil did invent many things against them; but thanks be to God, he was not able to prevail over all. For the brave Germanicus strengthened those that feared, by his patience, and fought gloriously with the beasts. For when the Proconsul would have persuaded him, telling him, that he should consider his age, and spare himself; he pulled the wild beast to him, and provoked him, being desirous the more quickly to be delivered from a wicked and unjust world. Upon this, the whole multitude wondering at the courage of the holy and pious race of Christians; cried out, "Take away those wicked wretches; let Polycarp be looked out."

IV. Then one named Quintus, a Phrygian, being newly come from thence, seeing the beasts, was afraid. This was he who forced himself and some others, to present themselves of their own accord to the trial. Him therefore the Proconsul persuaded with many promises, to swear and sacrifice. For which cause, brethren, we do not commend those who offer themselves to persecution; seing the Gospel teaches no such thing.

V. But the most admirable Polycarp, when he first heard that he was called for, was not at all concerned at it; but resolved to tarry in the city. Nevertheless, he was at the last persuaded, at the desire of many, to go out of it. He departed therefore into a little village, not far distant from the city, and there tarried with a few about him; doing nothing night nor day, but praying for all men, and for the churches which were in all the world, according to his usual custom. And, as he was praying, he saw a vision, three days before he was taken; and, behold, the pillow under his head seemed to him on fire. Whereupon, turning to those that were with him, he said, prophetically, "That he should be burnt alive."

VI. Now when those who were to take him drew near, he departed into another village; and immediately they who sought him came thither. And when they found him not, they seized upon two young men that were there; one of which, being tormented, confessed. It was impossible, therefore, that he should be concealed, forasmuch as they who betrayed him were his own domestics. So the officer, who is also called *Cleronomus*, Herod by name, hastened to bring him into the lists: that so Polycarp might receive his proper portion, being made a partaker of Christ; and they that betrayed him, undergo the punishment of Judas.

VII. The serjeants, therefore, and horsemen, taking the young lad along with them, departed about supper time, being Friday, with their usual arms, as it were against a thief or a robber. And being come to the place where he was, about the close of the evening, they found him lying down in a little upper room, from whence he could easily have escaped into another place, but he would not, saying, "The will of the Lord be done." Wherefore, when he heard that they were come to the house, he went down, and spake to them. And as they that were present wondered at his age and constancy, some of them began to say, "Was there need of all this care to take such an old man?" Then presently he ordered, that the same hour there should be somewhat got ready for them, that they might eat and drink their fill: desiring them, withal, that they would give him one hour's liberty the while, to pray without disturbance. And when they had permitted him, he stood praying, being full of the grace of God; so that he ceased not for two whole hours, to the admiration of all that heard him: insomuch, that many of the soldiers began to repent that they were come out against so godly an old man.

VIII. As soon as he had done his prayer, in which he remembered all men, whether little or great, honourable or obscure, that had at any time been acquainted with him; and with them the whole Catholic Church, over all the world: the time being come that he was to depart, the guards set him upon an ass, and so brought him into the city, being the day of the Great Sabbath. And Herod, the chief officer, with his father, Nicetes, met him in a chariot. And having taken him up to them, and set him in the chariot, they began to persuade him, saying, "What harm is there in it, to say, Lord Cæsar, and sacrifice (with the rest that is usual on such occasions) and so be safe?" But Polycarp, at first, answered them not; whereupon, they continuing to urge him, he said, "I shall not do what you would persuade me to." So being out of all hope of prevailing with him, they began first to rail at him, and then with violence threw him out of the chariot, insomuch that he hurt his thigh with the fall. But he not turning back, went on readily with all diligence, as if he had received no harm at all; and so was brought to the lists, where there was so great a tumult, that no body could be heard.

IX. As he was going into the lists, there came a voice from Heaven to him; "Be strong, Polycarp, and quit thyself like a man." Now no one saw who it was that spake to him; but for the voice, many of our brethren who were present, heard it. And as he was brought in, there was a great disturbance when they heard how that Polycarp was taken. And when he came near, the Proconsul asked him, "Whether he was Polycarp? Who, confessing that "He was;" he persuaded him to deny the faith, saying, "Reverence thy old age," with many other things of the like nature, as their custom is; concluding thus, "Swear by Cæsar's fortune. Repent, and say, take away the wicked." Then Polycarp, looking with a stern countenance upon the whole multitude of wicked Gentiles, that was gathered together in the lists, and shaking his hand at them, looked up to heaven, and groaning said, "Take away the wicked." But the Proconsul, insisting and saying, "Swear, and I will set thee at liberty; reproach Christ." Polycarp replied, "Eighty and six years have I now served Christ, and he has never done me the least wrong: how then can I blaspheme my King and my Saviour?"

X. And when the Proconsul nevertheless still insisted, saying, "Swear by the genius of Cæsar." He answered, "Seeing thou art so vainly urgent that I should swear, as thou callest it, by the genius of Cæsar, seeming as if thou didst not know what I am; hear me freely professing it to thee, that I am a Christian. But if thou further desirest an account what Christianity is, appoint a day, and thou shalt hear it." The Proconsul replied, "Persuade the people." Polycarp answered, "To thee have I offered to give a reason of my faith: for so are we taught to pay all due honour, (such only excepted as would be hurtful to ourselves,) to the powers and authorities which are ordained of God. But for the people, I esteem them not worthy, that I should give any account of my faith to them."

XI. The Proconsul continued, and said unto him, "I have wild beasts ready, to those I will cast thee except thou repent." He answered, "Call for them, then; for we Christians are fixed in our minds not to change from good to evil: but for me it will be good to be changed from evil to good." The Proconsul added; "Seeing thou despisest the wild beasts, I will cause thee to be devoured by fire, unless thou shalt repent." Polycarp answered, "Thou threatenest me with fire which burns for an hour, and so is extinguished; but knowest not the fire of the future judgment, and of that eternal punishment, which is reserved for the ungodly. But why tarriest thou? Bring forth what thou wilt?"

XII. Having said this, and many other things of the like nature, he was filled with confidence and joy, insomuch that his very countenance was full of grace: so that he did not only not let it fall with any confusion at what was spoken to him; but on the contrary, the Procunsul was struck with astonishment: and sent his crier into the middle of the lists to proclaim three several times, "Polycarp has professed himself to be a Christian." Which being done by the crier, the whole multitude both of the Gentiles and of the Jews which dwelt at Smyrna, being full of fury, cried out with a loud voice, "This is the Doctor of Asia; the Father of the Christians, and the overthrower of our Gods. He that has taught so many not to sacrifice, nor pay any worship to the gods." And saying this, they cried out and desired Philip, the Asiarch, that he would let loose a lion against Polycarp. But Philip replied, "That it was not lawful for him to do so, because that kind of spectacles was already over. Then it pleased them to cry out with one consent, that Polycarp should be burnt alive. For so it was necessary that the vision should be fulfilled which was made manifest unto him by his pillow, when seeing it on fire as he was praying, he turned about and said prophetically to the faithful that were with him, "I must be burnt alive."

XIII. This, therefore, was done with greater speed than it was spoke; the whole multitude instantly gathering together woods and faggots, out of the shops and baths: the Jews especially, according to their custom, with all readiness assisting them in it. When the fuel was ready, Polycarp, laying aside all his upper garments, and undoing his girdle, tried also to pull off his clothes underneath, which aforetime he was not wont to do; forasmuch as always every one of the Christians that was about him contended who should soonest touch his flesh. For he was truly adorned by his good conversation with all kind of piety, even before his martyrdom. This being done, they presently put about him such things as were necessary to prepare the fire. But when they would have also nailed him to the stake, he said, "Let me alone as I am: for he who has given me strength to endure the fire, will also enable me, without your securing me by nails, to stand without moving in the pile."

XIV. Wherefore they did not nail him, but only tied him to it. But he having put his hands behind him, and being bound as a ram chosen out of a great flock, for an offering, and prepared to be a burnt sacrifice, acceptable unto God, looked up to Heaven, and said: "O Lord God Almighty, the Father of thy well-beloved, and blessed Son, Jesus Christ, by whom we have received the knowledge of Thee; the God of angels and powers, and of every creature, and especially of the whole race of just men who live in Thy presence! I give Thee hearty thanks that Thou hast vouchsafed to bring me to this day, and to this hour; that I should have a part in the number of Thy martyrs, in the cup of Thy Christ, to the resurrection of eternal life, both of soul and body, in the incorruption of the Holy Ghost. Among which may I be accepted this day before Thee, as a fat and acceptable sacrifice; as Thou the true God, with whom is no falsehood, hast both before ordained, and manifested unto me, and also hast now fulfilled it. For this, and for all things else, I praise Thee, I bless Thee, I glorify Thee, by the eternal and heavenly High Priest, Jesus Christ, thy beloved Son; with whom to Thee and the Holy Ghost, be glory both now, and to all succeeding ages. AMEN."

XV. He had no sooner pronounced aloud Amen, and finished his prayer, but they who were appointed to be his executioners, lighted the fire. And when the flame began to blaze to a very great height, behold a wonderful miracle appeared to us who had the happiness to see it, and who were reserved by heaven, to report to others what had happened. For the flame, making a kind of arch, like the sail of a ship filled with the wind, encompassed, as in a circle, the body of the holy martyr. Who stood in the midst of it, not as if his flesh were burnt, but as bread that is baked, or as gold or silver glowing in the furnace.

XVI. At length when those wicked men saw that his body could not be consumed by the fire, they commanded the executioner to go near him, and stick his dagger in him.

XVII. Such was the passion of the blessed Polycarp; who though he was the twelfth of those who, together with those of Philadelphia, suffered martyrdom, is yet alone chiefly had in memory of all men: insomuch that he is spoken of, by the very Gentiles themselves, in every place, as having been not only an eminent teacher, but also a glorious martyr. Whose death all desire to imitate, as having been every way conformable to the Gospel of Christ. For having by patience overcome the unjust governor, and so received the crown of immortality, he now, together with the Apostles, and all other righteous men who have gone before, with great triumph, glorifies God, even the Father: and blesses our Lord the governor both of our souls and bodies; and Shepherd of the Catholic Church which is over all the earth.

[This account was written about A. D. 140. Polycarp is supposed to have been the "Angel of the Church of Smyrna." See Rev. ii., 8 to 11.]

THE IMPROVEMENT OF MANKIND.

Before any plan for the improvement of mankind can be brought extensively into effect, the principle of *avarice*, as it now operates in society, *must be counteracted and subdued.*

The great object of the majority of mankind appears to be, to acquire as much wealth as possible, not for the purpose of applying it to the service of God and the good of society, but to gratify a selfish principle and an avaricious propensity—to make a splendid figure in life, to lay up portions for children, or merely to glory in the idea of having hundreds or thousands of guineas or bank notes deposited in a chest, in the stocks, or other place of security. Every one seems to think that he may use his money just as he pleases, without being responsible to a higher Power; and even many of those who call themselves *Christians*, are glaringly guilty of that "covetousness which is idolatry," although they are pointedly admonished that the "love of money is the root of all evil," and, consequently, the prevention of much good; and that "it leads into many snares and temptations, and foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition." Nothing can be more irrational and degrading than for an immortal being to hoard up treasures which he never applies to any useful purpose, and who only feasts his imagination with the idea that he has them, to a certain amount, in his possession. Yet thousands of such characters exist even in the Christian world. What should we think of the man who took it into his head to lay up, in a large shed or garret, which was carefully locked up from public view, five thousand pair of boots, ten thousand tea-cups, twenty thousand coffee-pots, or thirty thousand cork-screws, with no other view than to please his fancy, and to tell the world that he had such a number of articles in his possession? We should, doubtless, consider him as an arrant fool, or even as a downright madman. And what is the difference between hoarding thousands of guineas, dollars, or bank notes, which are never brought forth for the benefit of mankind, and accumulating fifty or a hundred thousand pair of boots, spurs, or knee-buckles? How ridiculous would it appear if all that could be said of a man when he died was, that the great object of his life was to lay up in store twenty-five thousand tea-kettles, which were never intended for cooking, and thirty thousand great coats, which were never intended to be worn? Equally foolish and contemptible is it, to lay up thousands of pounds or dollars that are never consecrated to the glory of God or the good of man. I know individuals who are worth one thousand pounds a year, and whose annual expenditure does not amount to above one hundred and fifty pounds; and I know others who are worth ten times that sum, who do not spend above two or three hundreds a year;—yet it is sometimes difficult to obtain from them a guinea, or even a few shillings, for a religious or philanthropic object; and, were you to call in question there Christianity, it would be considered as little short of an insult.*

It becomes Christian churches and ministers seriously to consider this subject, if they wish to see the principles of pure Christianity reduced to practice, and worldly maxims undermined, and if they would be instrumental in preparing the way for the universal propagation of the Gospel, and the arrival of the predicted millennium. Were it not for the prevalence of the debasing principle of avarice, we should, ere long, have seminaries of all descriptions established among us, for training both the young and the old in knowledge and virtue, and "to glory and immortality"—we should have our towns and cities cleared of every nuisance—our roads and footpaths improved—our deserts turned into fruitful fields—new towns and villages erected on spacious plans—intelligence speedily and cheaply conveyed—the physical aspect of the country beautified and adorned—and the whole frame of society transformed and remodelled, in conformity with the principles of reason and religion. Were I to enter into minute calculations on this subject, it might easily be shown, that the wealth presently possessed by civilized nations, were it properly distributed and applied, would be more than sufficient to introduce every improvement in society, physical, moral, and intellectual, of which the terrestrial state of man is susceptible—to raise the degraded mass of this world's population to intelligence and virtue—to bring into a state of cultivation almost every waste on the face of the globe—to intersect every country with canals and rail-roads—and to transform the whole earth into a paradise, scarcely inferior in beauty to that which appeared at the first creation. And those who expended their superfluous wealth in such noble achievements, so far from having any of their sensitive enjoyments diminished, would enjoy a happiness, both physical and mental, far surpassing any thing which they formerly experienced.—*Dick.*

ADVICE TO YOUNG CHRISTIANS.

Take heed lest any persecution or wrong from others, provoke you to any unwarrantable passions and practices, and deprive you of the charity, meekness, and innocency of a Christian.

Persecutions and wrongs are called temptations in Scripture, because they try you, whether you will hold your integrity. As many fall in such trials, through the fear of men, and the love of the world and their prosperity; so when you seem most confirmed against any sinful compliance, there is a snare laid for you to draw you into passions and practices on the other side that are unwarrantable.

Those that are tainted with pride, uncharitableness, and schism, will itch to be persecuting those that comply not with them in their way; and yet, while they do it, they will cry out most against pride, uncharitableness, and schism themselves. This is, and hath been, and will be too ordinary in the world. You may think that schism should be far from them that seem to do all for order and unity. But never look to see this generally cured, when you have said and done the best you can. You must therefore resolve, not only to fly from church division yourselves,* but also to undergo the persecutions and wrongs of proud and zealous church dividers. It is great weakness in you to think such usage strange: do you not know that enmity is put, from the beginning, between the woman's and the serpent's seed? And do you think the name or dead profession of Christianity doth extinguish the enmity in the serpent's seed? Do you think to find more kindness from proud, ungodly Christians (so called,) than Abel might have expected from his brother Cain? Do you not know that the Pharisees, by their zeal for their pre-eminence, and traditions, and ceremonies, and the expectation of worldly dignity and rule from the Messiah, were more zealous enemies of Christ then the Heathens were? And that the carnal members of the church are oft the greatest persecutors of the spiritual members? "As then he that was born after the flesh, did persecute him that was born after the spirit, even so it is now." It is your taking the ordinary case of the godly for a strange thing, that makes you so disturbed and passionate when you suffer. Remember, therefore, that the great motive that causeth the devil to persecute you is not to hurt your bodies, but to tempt your souls to impatience and sin: and if it may be said of you, as of Job, "In all this Job sinned not," you have got the victory, and are "more than conquerers."

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* The late distinguished philanthropist, J. B. Wilson, Esq., of Clapham Common, was once heard to say of one who had been looked up to as a good man and Christian. "He died wickedly rich,"—evidently implying, that he thought such a man's Christianity was extremely doubtful.

*By never usurping authority over your brethren, and by never making any thing a condition of fellowship with you which Christ has not made a condition of fellowship with him; which are the great causes of Schism. Ed.

See, therefore, that ye "resist not evil." Imitate your Lord, "who when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered he threatened not, but committed all to him that judgeth righteously; leaving us an example that we should follow his steps." An angry zeal against those who cross and hurt us is so easily kindled and so hardly suppressed, that it appeareth there is more in it of corrupted nature than of God. We are very ready to think that we may "call for fire from heaven" upon the enemies of the Gospel: but (when you thus think) "you know not what manner of spirit you are of." Christ saith unto you, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you: that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven." You find no such prohibition against patient suffering of wrong from any. Take heed of giving way to secret wishes of hurt to your adversaries, or to reproachful words against them. Take heed of hurting yourselves by passion or sin, because others hurt you by slanders or persecutions. Keep you in the way of your duty, and leave your names and lives to God. Be careful to preserve your innocency, and in your patience possess your souls, and God will keep you from any hurt from enemies, but what he will cause to work for your good. Read Psal. 37. "Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass. And he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noon day. Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him: fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of him who bringeth wicked devices to pass. Cease from anger, and forsake wrath: fret not thyself in any wise to do evil."—*Baxter*.

LOOK FOR PERSECUTION.

Nothing is more familiar with wicked men, than to slander and reproach the holy ways and servants of the Lord. No wisdom, no measure of holiness or righteousness, will exempt the godly from their malice; otherwise, Christ himself at least would have been exempted, if not his Apostles and other Saints, whom they have slandered and put to death. Christ hath foretold us what to expect from them. John xv. 18, 21. "If the world hate you, you know that it hated me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember the word that I said unto you; the servant is not greater than his Lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my sayings, they will keep your's also."

The truth is, wicked men are the seed and children of the devil, and have his image, and obey him, and think, and speak, and do as he would have them; and the godly are the seed and members of Christ, and bear his image, and obey him: and do you think that the devil and his children will speak well of the ways or followers of Christ? I must confess, till I had found the truth of it by experience, I was not sensible how impudent in belying, and cruel in abusing the servants of Christ, his worldly, malicious enemies are. I had read oft, how early an enmity was put between the woman's and the serpent's seed;—I had read and wondered, that the first man that was born into the world did murder his brother for worshiping God more acceptably than himself; "because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous." 1 John iii. 12. I had read the inference verse 13, "Marvel not my brethren, if the world hate you;" but yet I did not so fully understand, that wicked men and devils are so very like, and so near of kin, till the words of Christ, John viii. 44, expounded by visible demonstrations, had taught it me. Indeed, the Apostle saith, 1st John iii. 12, that Cain was of that wicked one, that is, the devil: but Christ saith more plainly, "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do; he was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him: when he speaketh of a lie, he speaketh of his own; for he is a liar and the father of it." Here note, that cruel lying and murdering are the principal actions of a devil; and that as the father of these, he is the father of the wicked, who are most notoriously addicted to these two courses against the most innocent servants of the Lamb. How just is it, that they dwell together hereafter, that are here so like in disposition and action: even as the righteous shall dwell with Christ, who love his image, and imitate his holy, suffering life.

I conclude, then, that if thou wilt never turn to God and a holy life, till wicked men give over belying and reproaching thee, thou mayst as well say, that thou wilt never be reconciled to God till the devil be first reconciled to him; and never love Christ, till the devil love him or bid thee love him; or never be a saint, till the devil bid thee, or will give thee leave; and that thou wilt not be saved, till the devil be willing that thou be saved.—*Baxter's Christian Directory.*

VARIETIES.

A TRAVELLING MINISTER.

A minister travelling in a stage-coach, had the mortification of being shut up for the night with a naval officer who was much addicted to swearing. At length the conversation turned on the topic of the day, the Boulogne flotilla; when the officer observed, "If one of our ships meet with them, she will send them all to the devil." "There is a great deal of propriety, sir," said the minister, "in your observation; for as it is probable there are many profane swearers on board the French ships, should these men die in their sins, they will certainly go to the devil." He looked confounded, blushed, but swore no more, and in the morning took a respectful leave.

PUBLIC REPROOF.

The late Rev. Mr B. was once entertaining himself with seeing some of his parishioners catching salmon, when Colonel ———, with several gentlemen, came near them. As the former, who was at that time a justice of the peace, was swearing in a very profane manner, Mr B. thus addressed him:—"Sir, you are a justice of the peace, and a gentleman of family and fortune, therefore your example to all should become the state in which kind Providence has placed you." He answered, "Sir, I will not come and swear in your church." This was spoken with great bitterness. Mr. B. then left him, but the fishermen afterwards said that the gentleman was very angry, and declared if the minister had not gone away he would have thrashed him. But his future conduct towards Mr B. became the gentleman; for, some time afterwards, Mr. B. having some business to transact with the justice, the latter at first sight thanked him for his reproof, but added, that he should not have given it in so public a manner. Mr. B. replied, "Sir, my reason for doing so was, because the fishermen who were present are my parishioners; and as swearing is a prevailing vice with them, I am frequently under the necessity of reproving them. Therefore, sir, reflect but a moment, and you will see the propriety of what I did, and of the public manner in which I did it. Would not the fishermen have said, that the minister could reprove THEM, but that he was afraid to reprimand the *justice*, had they not witnessed the contrary?" The gentleman was well pleased with Mr. B.'s remarks, and ever after he treated him with the greatest kindness and respect.

RELIGION, SIXTEEN HUNDRED YEARS AGO.

"I COULD wish you would follow our example, who by the persuasions of the Logos have revolted from these spiritual wickednesses, and come over to the obedience of the only unbegotten God, through his Son Jesus Christ. We who heretofore gave ourselves a loose to women, now strictly contain ourselves within the bounds of chastity; we who devoted ourselves to magic arts, now consecrate ourselves entirely to the good unbegotten God; we who loved nothing like our possessions, now produce all we have in common, and spread our whole stock before our indigent brethren; we who were pointed with mutual hatred and destruction, and would not so much as warm ourselves at the same fire with those of a different tribe, upon the account of different institutions, now since the coming of Christ cohabit and diet together, and pray for our enemies; and all our returns for evil are but the gentlest persuasives to convert those who unjustly hate us; that by living up to the same virtuous precepts of Christ, they might be filled with the same comfortable hopes of obtaining the like happiness with ourselves, from that God who is the Lord of all things."—*Justin Martyr.*

ANSWER TO A HINT.

DEAR FRIEND,—

In the *Evangelical Reformer* there is something like this,—*a nice young man as one could wish to see.* It is a thing that keeps us from the blessedness of the spirit, is this way of outward observation. Let the readers of thy writings be drawn into the way to have the Father's comforting favour through this life of troubles, by mortifying themselves to the carnal nature. Farewell,

GREY HAIRS.

Ans. I do not know what part of the *Evangelical Reformer* it is that my friend refers to, and I do not recollect the passage from which he quotes, but I rather think that the phrase "*a nice young man*" has reference to the young man's mind and character, and not to the form and complexion of his body. I know that we are too prone to esteem men according to their outward appearance, and I know that this is an evil. Appearances and circumstances are nothing with God, and they ought to be nothing with us: the mind and character are every thing. We ought to esteem every one according to his moral, religious worth.

REVIEW, &c.

The Law and Obligation of Believers respecting Marriage. A Sermon, by Ralph Waller.

How little is said by ministers and others, whose duty it is to instruct and counsel mankind, in the way of advice and caution respecting marriage. And yet marriage is a matter in which nearly every person is directly interested; it is a step in taking which, greater consideration is required, because of the lasting and important consequences which follow, than need be exercised on almost any other subject. Marriage, indeed, in a sense, is either the making or the undoing of those who become united in its bonds. And yet, we say, how little notice is taken of it by Christian teachers; so that persons are, in a great measure, left to form their notions at random as to what is proper or otherwise, without being assisted, as they should be, in a concern which affects their welfare in time and in eternity. In the ancient Jewish church, and in the Primitive christian church, the duties connected with marriage, were carefully inculcated; but, more recently, the subject has been neglected, to the great detriment of religion, and the disadvantage of individuals. The young are permitted to be governed by momentary impulses of passion, or of interest, and indeed of any other motive which may operate upon them.

We are happy, therefore, whenever we find this subject, of universal concernment as it is, taken up by ministers of the Gospel, and we trust it will not in future be so much lost sight of, as it has been in times past. The happiness of individuals, of families, as well as the credit and prosperity of the church of Christ, are intimately connected therewith; it is impossible, therefore, to exercise too great caution, or to be too frequent and earnest in inculcating what ought to be observed with regard to marriage.

Mr. Waller's sermon contains many judicious thoughts, together with salutary advice on the subject, under the following general heads, which are again subdivided, so as to include all the particulars necessary to illustrate his views as to the duty of christians in relation to marriage:—1. What is the law of God on this subject? 2. What are the reasons of the law? 3. What are the causes which lead to the breaking of this law? 4. What are the excuses for breaking this law? 5. Cases of difficulty respecting the law. 6. The evil effects resulting from a violation of this law. 7. Improper marriages where this law is not violated. We can cordially recommend this discourse, as manifesting an excellent spirit, and as well calculated to impart a useful lesson on a most import subject.

INTELLIGENCE.

Very encouraging circumstances are transpiring in almost every direction. We have, already, very cheering indications as to the results to be anticipated from the progress of Evangelical Reform. One of the most prominent of these is, a deep and increasing solicitude, among our friends, for the conversion of sinners. This is becoming evident, both in their common conversation, and in the tenour of their devotional exercises. And, it is also to be seen in the increasing amount of their benevolent labours. Many of them seem to be determined *in very deed*, to live for God. And with an increasing desire for the salvation of souls, and an increasing labour to secure this; we also perceive a strong and stedfast expectation of success. Nor does this expectation appear to us to be unfounded; the expressions of it among our friends, seem generally to be accompanied with pleasing testimonies that the expected prosperity of the work of God *is already begun at home.* And, indeed, it is manifest, that the "living water" is already springing up more abundantly and constantly in very many hearts. And as for *party spirit*, if this should continue to decrease among our friends as it appears to be decreasing now, we shall, ere long, cease to hear its discordant, peace-destroying voice. Accessions from the world are almost daily augmenting the numbers of several churches. In some cases these accessions are taking place noiselessly and gradually, but still they are satisfactory and likely to be permanent. But in other instances we have been privileged to witness what must be regarded as drops which precede a heavier shower. After seasons of deep and solemn feeling, on some occasions, the presence of the "Master of Assemblies," in several congregations, has been so remarkably experienced, that tears and sighs of penitence have prevailed, and a goodly number have gone home to their houses justified, and praising God. These things encourage us, and we are increasingly persuaded, that in proportion to the spread of Evangelical Reform,—in exact proportion as men give all they are and have to God, will the influence and power of Christianity be felt by the unconverted portion of mankind. Let us go on, and we *shall* see greater things than these. And if we do this, and *continue* walking in the fear of God, by *doing all his will*, we shall not then have to spend our time in attempting to *bring about revivals*, but a *permanent progression* both as to piety and numbers shall be secured. And until this be the case with the Church of Christ generally, the world cannot be saved.

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SPIRITUALITY OF MIND.

(Continued from page 209.)

WE shall now proceed to mention a few considerations which should operate as incentives to the cultivation of an exalted spirituality of mind. We are aware that without the influences of God's holy spirit, no motives that can be adduced by mortals, are sufficient to produce those affections and dispositions in which true spirituality consists. But the holy spirit works by means, and truth is the great instrument which he employs. While, therefore, we depend entirely on the agency of the spirit for the success of our efforts, it is ours to present the truth to the minds of men, hoping that he will make that truth effectual to their conversion or edification.

The first consideration that we would urge on the attention of our readers is this:—That the spirituality of mind which has been described, is the highest object of our existence. When we attentively consider the subject, it is impossible for us to entertain the idea for a moment, that human nature was intended for no higher object than the attainment of earthly good. To suppose that the soul of man was designed for nothing but the pursuit and acquisition of sensual pleasure, or any other form of earthly good, is to do violence to every righteous, pure, and noble principle.

The soul, with its capacities for unceasing progress in knowledge and in virtue,—its feeling of deep dissatisfaction with almost every thing past or present, and its restless aspirings after a higher and purer state of existence! The soul, with its infant powers, but just beginning to unfold themselves, and yet in their first developments affording the promise and the pledge of better and of greater things! This soul, designed only to live on earth, and to content itself with this world's vain delights! No, No, it cannot be! It would be supposing such a want of wisdom in the Creator to endow us with such vast capacities, and leave us destitute of objects on which they might be put forth —or such a want of goodness, to tantalize his creatures by awakening desires that never could be satisfied, that it shocks every upright, generous sensibility to entertain the thought for a moment. The soul must have a richer portion than earth can furnish; it must have more varied exercises, nobler pursuits, more elevated pleasures, than any that belong exclusively to time. An immortal mind was never fitted to find satisfaction in wealth, or rank, or fame, or the gratification of mere animal appetites. It is in the acquisition of knowledge, but especially the knowledge of spiritual truths,—in the conquest of evil propensities, and the subjugation of evil habits,—in the cultivation of pious and benevolent sympathies and affections,—in the formation of exalted plans of usefulness, and in the patient, diligent, unwearied prosecution of such plans,—in the contemplation of the divine character, the imitation of the Saviour's example, the grateful recollection of his atoning death, and in calm, placid reliance on his all-prevalent advocacy and intercession,—in short, it is in habits of close communion with God, and a spirit of entire devotion to his will, that the human mind realizes the objects for which it was created; objects, which yield not a momentary pleasure, and thereby exhaust their power to impart enjoyment; but objects adapted to the endless improvability of the mind; objects which yield increasing enjoyment in proportion as the soul advances in intelligence and purity; in proportion as it is assimilated to the perfection of God himself.

Reader, what is thy choice? The low, unworthy pleasures of sense, for which the brutes were formed as well as thyself, and which, in common with thee, the brutes enjoy? The poor satisfactions of vanity or ambition, which must necessarily terminate in the grave, where rich and poor, renowned and unnoticed, alike lie down in rottenness and dust? Are these the portions thou hast chosen for thy heaven-born spirit? And was it for this that God endowed thee with a nature like that of angels,—a nature like his own? Was it for this that God implanted in thy mind those restless aspirings after further good,—those eager longings which can be satiated with nothing less than joys which are immortal? Was it for this that God enkindled a spark of etherial fire within thee, adapted to glow with ever-increasing brilliance and ardour, aspiring to the source from whence it emanated at the first? O, reader, consider what thou art; consider whence thy being is derived, and why it was bestowed; and let considerations like these arouse thee from thy guilty slumbers. Awake from thy dreams of sensual delight. Awake to a consciousness of the dignity and happiness for which thou wast originally formed. Awake to spiritual exercises and spiritual conflicts, to spiritual triumphs and spiritual joys.

2. The second consideration that we would urge on your attention is this—that to restore us to spirituality of mind was the great object of the Saviour's mission to our world. Of all the sad results that followed the introduction of sin into the world, this was one of the most deplorable; that the mind of man became sensual in its inclinations, and earthly in its pursuits. Cut off by sin from intercourse with God, it sought for satisfaction in the creature. Having forsaken the fountain of living waters, cisterns, broken cisterns were hewn out, that could hold no water. In the gratification of licentious propensities, and of proud and malevolent passions, men began to seek the happiness which could only result from the cultivation of the nobler powers, and the exercise of humble, benevolent dispositions. So completely were men's minds turned from the Creator to the creature, that before the advent of the Saviour, they had, with scarcely an exception, put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter. And it was to turn men's minds from the creature to the uncreated source of all things; to lead them to transfer their affections from earth to heaven; to bring the body into full subjection to the soul, and the soul into cheerful submission to the Divine will, that the Son of God appeared on earth as the Redeemer of the human race. And all that he said, and did, and suffered, was in perfect harmony, in strict accordance with this design. The doctrines which he taught were all intended to diminish our regard for the things of time and sense, and to quicken us to the pursuit of nobler objects. He taught that a man's life, or happiness, consisteth not in the abundance of the things that he possesseth. He emphatically pronounced that man *a fool*, who, surveying the extent of his earthly possessions, said to his soul, "Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry." He taught that suffering was to be preferred to sin; that if our eye or hand should offend us, we should pluck out the one, or cut off the other; that it is better with one eye or one hand to enter into life, than with both eyes or both hands to be cast into hell. He taught that he who saveth his life, shall lose it; while he who loseth his life, for the sake of conscience or the truth, shall find it.

He assured his disciples that all those who, for his sake and the Gospel's, shall forsake houses or lands, or father or mother, or life itself, shall in this world receive a hundred fold in inward peace and satisfaction of mind, and in the world to come, life everlasting. Instituting a comparison between temporal and spiritual good, he solemnly inquires, What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul? And to teach the matchless worth of the human spirit more impressively than it could be taught by any positive declaration, he proposed that thrilling question, What shall a man give in exchange for his soul? To give the fullest effect to his teachings on this subject, he partially disclosed to view the wonders of the invisible world; and by exhibiting the sad results of sin in a future state of being, he laboured to fix the conviction in our breasts, that all evils are trifling in comparison with the parent evil, sin; that the keenest sufferings which a righteous man can endure, are happiness itself, compared with the dark, and cheerless, and unending miseries of sin. By unveiling the celestial regions, and disclosing to the view of mortals the bright unfading rewards of holiness in the world to come, he endeavoured to arouse us from our lethargy, and animate us to the pursuit of holiness and everlasting life. He pourtrayed the wonders and solemnities of the final day, and declared that the only persons who shall be approved by the Judge, are those who have preferred others interests and comforts to their own; who have proved their devotedness to God, by their kindness to his offspring; while those who have been swallowed up by earthly solicitudes and pursuits; who, amid their ceaseless efforts to enrich or aggrandize themselves, have neglected their perishing brethren, and forgotten the God who styles himself their advocate and friend, shall see on the face of the Judge a frown, and hear from his lips a terrible sentence of condemnation. By the clear announcement and earnest application of truths like these, the Saviour sought to emancipate the minds of men from their fleshly yoke, to call them off from selfish pursuits and sensual pleasures, to the cultivation of the pure and exalted spirituality which we have endeavoured to describe.

And his example illustrated and enforced the lessons that he taught by his lips. He had a body like ourselves. Of all the appetites of our inferior nature he was doubtless conscious. He was possessed of affections too, and there was nothing in the nature of these affections merely, to prevent them from being placed on earthly instead of heavenly objects. He was tempted also; the enemy of souls assailed him and endeavoured to produce unholy feelings in his breast. But no, he was proof against all the allurements of sense, and all the assaults of infernal adversaries. He inculcated the purest spirituality on others; he exhibited the purest spirituality himself. Wealth, rank, fame, pleasure, were all within his reach; all, in fact, at his command. But all the kingdoms of the earth could not tempt him to forget the great end of his mission into our world. The people on one occasion attempted to take him by force and make him a king; but they did not succeed. He shrank from the honours that they intended to confer upon him. No earthly dignity or splendour had any charms for his devoted spirit. His mission was a spiritual one; his kingdom was not of this world. It was a spiritual dominion that he came to establish; a spiritual influence that he came to exert. His business was with men's minds; his object was to instruct, and renovate, and bless them; his only instruments were truth and love. Throughout his earthly career he furnished to his disciples and the world an example of the purest and most elevated spirituality of mind. A spirituality that regarded all considerations of pain or pleasure, of earthly gain or loss, of temporal good or evil, as of no account in comparison with the glory of God and the spiritual interests of the human family. He left us an example that we should follow in his steps.

His sufferings and death were intended to accomplish the same object as his teaching and example. I am aware that the primary object of the Saviour's sufferings and death was to atone for human guilt, "That God might be just and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." But an unguarded solicitude for the maintenance of this important doctrine, has closed the eyes of numbers to the influence that the cross of Christ was intended to exert on human character. And yet this is of such vast importance, that where the death of Jesus does not produce *in us* a death unto sin and a new life unto righteousness, it cannot procure *for us* the forgiveness of our sins. When the Apostle says "God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ," he adds, "By whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." O yes, he gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify us unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. He bore our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead unto sin, might live unto righteousness. Impressed with the matchless worth of an immortal spirit, he died for its redemption. To exhibit the intense malignity, the unspeakable evil of sin, he poured out his life an expiation for human transgression. "We were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from our vain conversation received by tradition from our fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." To lead us justly to estimate the value of spiritual blessings, holy dispositions, heavenly enjoyments, he procured them for us at the expense of his own humiliation, agonies, and death. "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor; that we, through his poverty, might be rich." Such were the objects of the Saviour's sufferings and death; and these objects are never fully accomplished till we are dead to the world and sin; till sensible, earthly objects, and fleshly appetites and inclinations lose their ascendancy over us; till spiritual objects are the most esteemed, and spiritual dispositions acquire uncontrolled dominion over us; till the flesh becomes completely subject to the spirit, and both are brought into full subjection to the will of God. Then and not till then can we adopt the Apostle's language; "For I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life that I live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who hath loved me and given himself for me."

The resurrection and ascension of Jesus were intended, as well as his teaching, example, and death, to spiritualize our minds. One of the greatest hindrances to spirituality with which we have to contend, is the difficulty we feel in forming distinct conceptions of spiritual things. Of the existence and nature of those things by which we are surrounded in this world, we are made aware through the medium of our senses. But our senses teach no lessons respecting the world of spirits. We see a man day after day, and year after year; we hear his voice and we behold his countenance. He dies; we follow him to the grave; we see him covered by the cold clods, and our senses convey no further intelligence to our minds respecting him. The memory indeed recalls the past, and dwells with pensive pleasure on scenes of by-gone days; and while reflecting on the past, we can sometimes almost imagine that we see his form and hear his voice; but it is only an illusion of the fancy, and quickly vanishes away. No, that form has disappeared, and our eyes dwell upon it with delight no more. That voice is hushed in silence, and we listen to the music of its tones no more. And now, to realize the fact that our friend still lives; that his existence and his consciousness remain; that though we have ceased to see and hear him, and to associate with him, he yet lives in a state of being incomparably superior to the present,—*there* is the difficulty, and a serious difficulty it is to most. Constituted and situated as we are, it is not easy to conceive distinctly of the existence and happiness of those that we can neither see, nor hear, nor feel; whose existence cannot be discerned by any of our senses. And that which we do not distinctly conceive, we shall sometimes find it difficult firmly to believe; and when our faith in the invisible world is weakened or shaken, our spirituality of mind is necessarily impaired. To meet this difficulty; to assist us in forming clear conceptions of another state of being besides that in which we at present dwell; to strengthen and establish our faith in the existence of such a state, Jesus rises from the dead. We see him die on Calvary; we see him interred in the rich man's sepulchre; and on the morning of the third day, we see him rise from the grave. Rise, not to remain in this world for a number of years, and then lie down in the sepulchre again; no, after sojourning on earth a sufficient length of time to establish the fact of his resurrection beyond dispute, we see him ascend the Mount of Olivet with his favoured disciples; and while conversing with them on the mysteries of the kingdom of God, a bright cloud receives him out of their sight, and he is taken up into heaven. Our senses, so to speak, are thus brought to the assistance of our faith, and *we see* that there is another receptacle for our departed friends besides the grave. Distinctness, vividness, substance is thus given to our conceptions of another state of being; our faith in its existence is wonderfully strengthened; and from that heaven where Jesus dwells, and where we hope, ere long, to dwell with him, we draw the most powerful motives to spirituality of mind.

And shall Jesus thus come from heaven to earth; shall he teach us the most important and impressive truths; shall he exemplify these truths in his own spiritual, devoted, heavenly life; shall he stoop to degradation, and infamy, and death. Shall he rise from the dead, and ascend to *his* father and *our* father, to *his* God and *our* God; shall he do all this to rouse us from our guilty slumbers, to wake us from our dreams of sensual delight; shall he do all this to raise us to the proper dignity and true happiness of our nature, and shall he do it all in vain? Shall his toils and sufferings be alike fruitless? Reader, hearken to his voice. Behold his bright example. See him suffer, hear him groan, behold him die. Think of his rising from the dead, of his ascension into heaven, and of his glory at the right hand of the Father, and let the thoughts of these things bring to an end thy earthliness, and breathe through thy soul the life and sympathies of the eternal world.

3. A third consideration that we would urge on the attention of our readers is this—that spirituality of mind is the only path to eminent and extensive usefulness. No man can be eminently and extensively useful, except by promoting the spread of religion in the earth; and nothing considerable in this way can be accomplished without spirituality of mind. Without spirituality of mind a man may do much for the advancement of science and civilization, and for the improvement of the temporal condition of mankind. But these things, apart from religious influence, are curses rather than blessings. All history proves that the progress of nations in science and civilization, if unaccompanied by proportionate advances in religious knowledge and moral principle, is a source of degradation, crime, and misery. No, if we would effectually serve the interests of mankind, we must labour for the spread of evangelical truth; if we would have the discoveries of science, and the lessons of philosophy, and the improvement of man's social condition to be real advantages, we must labour to diffuse, in connection with them all, the influence of true religion. And how can this be done without deep spirituality of mind? How can a man teach the truths that he has not learnt? How can he successfully promulgate principles which he has not himself embraced? A deep and extensive knowledge of spiritual things—such a knowledge as is possessed only by spiritually-minded men, is essential to qualify us for teaching spiritual truth to others; and it is only in proportion as spiritual truth is effectively taught and cordially received, that the true, the highest interests of society are promoted.

And then, without spirituality of mind, no man will be prepared to sustain the conflicts and privations, the reproaches and sufferings which fall to the lot of those who seek to promote the spread of true religion in the earth. We know that a man may spend his life in teaching religious truth *in a certain way*, without subjecting himself to inconvenience or suffering thereby. If he deals only in vague generalities—if he never fairly grapples with the prevailing vices of his times, or seeks their overthrow by the faithful inculcation of those particular truths to which they are opposed, he may pass through life smoothly and easily enough; no man will reproach, or revile, or persecute him, but all men will speak well of him. But, then, he *does* nothing. The world is no better for his efforts. He might as well, for any benefit that results from his labours, have been asleep from his cradle to his grave. If a man is to teach religious truth to purpose, he must teach that truth in all its fulness, and apply it to the wants and ways of men with all fidelity. He must manfully oppose existing evils, and faithfully reprove prevailing sins;—he must tear the mask from the face of the hypocrite, and expose the flimsy excuses by which the transgressor encourages himself in sin. He must bear testimony to slighted and unpopular truths; and he must inculcate forgotten and neglected duties. And no man can pursue a course like this, without exposing himself to misrepresentation and reproach, privation and distress: and if he should embrace the principles of the Gospel in all their strictness and fulness; if he should carry them out thoroughly in his own practice, and faithfully inculcate them on others, he must expect to have his name cast out as evil, and he may perhaps be called to endure the loss of all things. And no man is likely to bear all the inconveniences and sufferings resulting from such a course, but he who is spiritually-minded. There are no earthly considerations that can sustain the soul under the loss of all earthly good. A man that seeks for riches, may be comforted by the acquisition of wealth under the loss of character that he thereby incurs. A man who prizes fame above every thing besides, may cheerfully sustain the loss of property in order to secure his favourite object. But the man who would effect a beneficial change in the religious principles and moral practices of mankind, must hold lightly every thing beneath the sun—he must be willing to forego the enjoyment of every earthly blessing; and nothing but spirituality of mind can prepare him to do this. Depend upon it, my friends, if you intend to devote your lives to the promotion of the best interests of your race, you will meet with obstacles that you cannot surmount, you will be assailed by opposition that you cannot withstand, you will have toils to undergo that you cannot sustain, and dangers to face that you will not be able to brave, unless you be sustained and animated by a distinct, clear, living perception of spiritual objects, and a deep, firm, practical, and unshaken conviction of their superiority to all earthly good. Unless you do deliberately prefer heaven to earth, the favour of the Almighty to the smile of mortals; unless you are disposed to sacrifice every thing for the sake of God and his cause, and the interests of your perishing fellow-men, patiently waiting for your reward in heaven, you will soon grow weary in well doing; your hearts will be discouraged by the difficulties of the work, and you will relinquish the enterprise in despair. Spirituality of mind is the only path to eminent and extensive usefulness.

This fact is clearly established by the history of those in different ages, who have been eminently serviceable to the cause of religion and human happiness. They have all been eminently spiritual men. A sense of God's presence, a regard for God's glory, gratitude to a dying, risen, exalted Saviour, faith in the realities of another world,—these were the motives by which they were impelled to their noble, arduous, self-denying exertions—the considerations which supported them under their toils and sufferings.

Whether we read the history of prophets, and apostles, and martyrs, in the word of God, or read the history of those in more modern times, who have distinguished themselves by the services they have rendered to the cause of religion and humanity, we shall find that they have all been spiritually-minded men; men who have lived within sight of eternity, who have walked with God, and endured as seeing him that is invisible. It was from the unseen Jehovah that they derived all those succours and consolations which were denied them by their fellow-mortals; it was the prospect of unfading and ever-increasing joys in the world to come, that cheered and supported them amid all the sorrows that they endured in the present life. And if you, my friends, would be followers of those who, through faith and patience, now inherit the promises; if you, like them, would spend your lives to some purpose, and leave the world better than you found it, you must cultivate the dispositions which they cherished, you must imitate their spiritual and heavenly conversation.

4. The last consideration that we would at present urge on the attention of our readers to induce them to cultivate a pure and elevated spirituality of mind is this,—that it constitutes the only preparation for future happiness. There is this wide difference between the present and a future state of being: in this world men have the opportunity to choose between the pleasures of sin and the pleasures of holiness: in the next, the only alternative will be, the pleasures of holiness, or the miseries of sin. Here, if a man reject the pure, spiritual pleasures of religion, he may, to some extent, supply the lack by the polluted gratifications of selfishness and sin. Not so in the world to come. If we die unprepared for the pleasures which are at God's right hand, all the objects and influences in the universe beside, will be unable to afford us the least enjoyment.—Reader, remember this! Thou hast no relish for the sober and tranquil joys of piety now,—and thou canst supply their place by revelling in the unhallowed gratifications of passion, and appetite, and sin. But, by and by, the case will be entirely altered. If thou pursue thy present course, till death summons thee into the world of spirits, thou wilt have neither a title to, nor a meetness for, those heavenly enjoyments which thou hast despised on earth. And whither canst thou flee for shelter or relief? Alas, there will be nothing in the whole wide universe to produce one thrill of satisfaction in thy desolate, cheerless, wretched soul! There will be no gold to satisfy the covetous desires of the miser there. There will be no intoxicating drink to satiate the drunkard's thirst, no licentious pleasures to gratify the libertine there! There the ambitious man will long in vain for distinction and for power; the votaries of gaiety and fashion will have no frivolous amusements to dissipate the eternal gloom which shall reign around them. Unconverted reader, ponder these things in thy heart! If thou art so disposed, thou hast an opportunity at present to barter away thy spiritual interests for the vain, short-lived joys of time and sense. But remember, if thou dost decide on such a course as this, in this world only canst thou have thy good things. If thou wilt have thy portion in this world, thou mayest; but remember, in that case thou hast no portion for the world to come. Spiritual good is the only good that can endure beyond the present life: spiritual joys alone are lasting as eternity. Choose this world for thy portion, and thou shalt find, as the prophet says, that thy bed is too short to stretch thyself on, and thy garment too narrow to wrap thyself in. All thy joys will fail when thy last breath is drawn, and nothing will await thee afterwards but a dark and cheerless and wretched eternity. Spirituality of mind is the only preparation for eternal happiness; "for to be carnally-minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace." T.

THE SEA; OR THE WISDOM AND GOODNESS OF DIVINE PROVIDENCE.

Question. Why should two-thirds or three-fourths of the earth be covered with water?

Ans. Some say, to make easier the intercourse of nations. But it seems to be forgotten by those friends, that if there had been no sea, there would have been land in its place, which might have been the abode of nations, and that in that case, instead of having to cross a wide sea to visit another country, we should have had the country and its inhabitants close to us. If the space between England and Germany was land instead of sea, we should not have to go so far east to reach a new land; we should have it at our doors. Or if Germany and the Continent at large had been placed close up to England, we should have had the opportunity of visiting Germany by merely crossing the street. There is, nevertheless, one great advantage which we derive from so great a part of our globe being covered with sea; it is this; the sea moderates the climates; it tempers the heat and the cold; preventing them from running into intolerable and ruinous extremes. It is known to many, that a sea air in summer is cooler than a land air; and that in winter it is just the contrary, a breeze from the land being colder in winter than a breeze from the sea. It will also have been observed by many, that the sea itself does not change so much with respect to heat and cold, as the land does. The waters of the wide open sea feel very little warmer in summer, than they do in winter. There *is* a difference, but it is comparatively little. But with the land, and with the confined waters on the land, the case is very different. In summer, the land will sometimes be so hot, that you can scarcely bear your hand upon it. I have myself felt the flags, and bricks, and the hard dry soil quite hot, almost burning hot. In some countries the exposed rocks and walls of buildings are, in the hottest seasons of the year, literally burning hot. In winter the land is subject to as great an extreme of cold. The flags and the bricks will be so cold in some countries, that they would actually take off the skin from a man's hand, if he should be so careless as to lay his naked hand upon them for a few moments. Even in our country, hard, close substances become almost thus cold. This accounts for the great difference between a breeze from the sea and a breeze from the land. It will, of course, be manifest, that the air coming over a long, cold surface, must itself become similarly cold; and that the air coming over a hot surface, must itself be hot. The air passing over the land in summer, when the surface of the land is so hot, that where it is hard and dry it is almost burning, is affected in the same way as air passing through an oven or hot pipes. And air passing over a cold surface, is cooled in the same way. Hence a land breeze, in summer, is hotter than a sea breeze; because the land over which it passes is hotter than the sea: in winter, a land breeze is colder than a sea breeze, because the land over which it passes is colder than the sea. The sea is neither so soon warmed nor so soon frozen; it remains more at one stay than the land: the sea thus becomes the softener, the moderator of all climates and of all seasons.

In winter the rivers far inland are frozen over in a single night; but the sea will bear a keen frost of several weeks without being frozen. Indeed, the wide open sea, where the volume of water is large, is never frozen. The remarks which I have just made, receive confirmation from this fact also. In continents, the heat and cold are more severe than in islands. Countries in the same latitude, and equally raised above the level of the sea, differ exceedingly with respect to heat and cold, if one country be an island, fixed in wide seas, and another a part of an extensive continent. In America, those parts which lie in the same latitude as Ireland and Great Britain, are far colder in winter, and far hotter in summer, than our country. And it is much the same with the countries on the continent of Europe.

Now suppose the whole earth to be continent; suppose land to be adjoined to land, without a single interval, all round the world; and what would be the consequence? the earth would be uninhabitable. The summers would be so hot, that the vegetable world would be burnt up, and every living thing would die; and the winters would be as fierce and ruinous in cold. It appears very probable, that if the vast and immeasurable spaces now filled with water, were to be turned to dry land, the heat of one single summer would set the earth on fire, and utterly burn it up. And it is equally probable, that one winter would, if it were not for the sea, by the fierce and irresistible rigours of its frosts, utterly extinguish both vegetable and animal life throughout the whole globe. And if any thing should survive the fierce extremes of heat and cold, yet the change from one extreme to the other would be so great and so rapid,—the winds, the storms, the floods, would be so fearfully wild and violent, that the whole surface of the globe would become one horrid wreck. As things are now, all things are happily tempered, and move on with wonderful regularity. Almost every land on earth is habit-able; every variety of climate and of season is tolerable, and almost every change from the extreme of one season to the extreme of another, is so measured and so gradual, as to occasion comparatively little inconvenience. The sea, like a mighty and ever watchful ruler, ceaselessly sends forth his softening, moderating influences in all directions, and through all lands. He tempers the heat, and he tempers the cold, and restrains the violence, and regulates the movements of every element. O Lord, how wondrous are thy works! in wisdom thou hast made them all.

THE USE OF TIME.

1. Spend it in nothing, as a deliberate moral act, which is not truly, directly or remotely, an act of obedience to some law of God.

2. Spend it in nothing which you know must be repented of.

3. Spend it in nothing on which you dare not, or on which you may not warrantably pray for God's blessing.

4. Spend it in nothing which you would not like to review at the hour of death, with an awakened, well-informed mind.

5. Spend it in nothing which you would not hear of in the day of judgment.

6. Spend it in nothing which you cannot safely and comfortably be found doing, if death should surprise you in the act.

7. Spend it in nothing which flesh-pleasing persuadeth you to against your consciences, or with a secret grudge or doubting of your consciences.

8. Spend it in nothing which hath not some tendency, directly or remotely, to your ultimate end, the pleasing of God, the welfare of your fellow-men, and the attainment of eternal happiness in heaven.

9. Spend it in nothing which tendeth to do more hurt than good; that would do a great hurt to some one, under pretence of doing some little good to others, which perhaps may better be done another way.

10. Lastly, spend it in nothing which is but a smaller good, when a greater good should be done.

TIMES OF TRIAL.

Times of trial let us know ourselves; they teach us what we are. They do not so much *make* us bad perhaps, as *show* us what bad things there are still within us. Many people, when they do wrong in times of trial, speak as if the trial was the *cause* of the wrong which they do; whereas the trial does no more perhaps than bring out to light, evils that were previously existing in the soul. I was speaking with a person very lately, in reference to the excitement and commotion which took place in this neighbourhood some time ago; and he said, "They often made me very wicked." I thought it would be more correct to say, that the things which had taken place had *shown* him something wicked about him, which he had not previously seen; that the agitation had not so much *caused* his imperfections, as brought them to light, and given him an opportunity of learning what was amiss within him.

It would be well for people, when they find themselves, in times of excitement and persecution, carried away by anger and resentment, if, instead of throwing the blame on the events and circumstances, they would take the blame home to themselves, and suspect the state of their souls. We have no right to reckon ourselves any better than we prove to be in times of trial. We are not to reckon our religious attainments according to what we feel in our class-meetings and love-feasts, nor according to the pleasure we find in reading good books; but according to the decision with which we choose the good and reject the evil in times of temptation, and according to the firmness and calmness with which we pass through reproach and persecution, and the perseverance with which we pursue the path of arduous duty. If we would know ourselves, we must ask ourselves what we are in our families, when our children try us, and when our husbands or wives disappoint and grieve us; and not what we are when sitting under a sermon from a favourite preacher, or when reading a book of our favourite author. We must ask ourselves what we are when we meet with rebukes, as well as when we meet with commendations; when we are betrayed, insulted, and reviled, as well as when we are surrounded by a host of smiling friends. We must reckon ourselves to have just so much religion as we exhibit in the hour of trial. If we do right no longer than while all things around us go on pleasantly, we have no right to reckon ourselves to have any religion at all. If we are good-tempered only so long as no one injures or insults us; if we are patient only so long as we are allowed to go on uncrossed; if we are calm and kind only so long as we are allowed to go on without persecution and disappointment, we have no right to reckon ourselves good-tempered or patient, or kind or calm, at all. We have just so much real, solid religion, as we find ourselves to have in the hour of trial. We are not to conclude that we are what we ought to be, because we feel little or nothing amiss with ourselves, when all things go on pleasantly around us; and to suppose, when we find ourselves wanting in the hour of trial, that the trial makes all the badness that we find about us: we are to consider those trials as bringing out to our view our real character, and showing us exactly what we are and what we are not.

And in those cases in which the progress of Evangelical Reform, and the excitements and controversies which accompany it, appear to do mischief, the mischief is frequently more in appearance than in reality. The persons that appear to be driven from religion by those commotions and separations, are frequently persons that have nothing more of religion than the name and the form. Some few of those who fall away in consequence of such excitements and commotions might be sincere, but there is reason to believe that most of those who leave the church and return to the world on such occasions, were Christians in profession only. They probably never understood religion, or never heartily submitted to its renovating influences; or if they were ever truly religious, they had probably lost their religion, and continued united to the church from mere interest or habit, or, for want of a suitable pretence for going away.

And even in those cases in which truly sincere persons fall from the church and from religion, it is through their own neglect. There is no necessity for them to fall away. If they were as watchful and as prayerful as they ought to be, they would not fall away. Religion, and Christ, and God are the same; and their souls and eternity are of the same importance in times of trial and commotion as at other times; so that they have no just reason for turning back to the world. The blame of *their* apostacy, therefore, ought not to be laid so much on the trying circumstances in which they were placed, as on their own unfaithfulness. Religion had the same claims on their reverence and love in the times of commotion, as in the times of peace; and if they had sought help of God, and faithfully improved the grace bestowed on them, they would have taken no harm.

Times of excitement and persecution are not so much destroying times, as winnowing times; they do not so much change people, as show what people are; and those who take part in propagating those truths, and in encouraging those principles of duty, which are the occasion of excitement and commotion, ought not to be alarmed or troubled, so long as they are careful to do every thing in the fear of God, and act in all things according to the principles of the Gospel. They ought to go forward, and leave the management of the storm to God. All that we are answerable for is the plain and faithful inculcation of truth and duty, and obedience to the law of Christ in our own temper and conduct: the rest belongs to God, and with him the responsibility should be left.

I say that those times of excitement and persecution are not so much destroying times, as winnowing times; they do not so much consume the church as refine it. This is the light in which John the Baptist appears to have regarded those times. He appears to have foreseen that the preaching and labours of the Saviour would occasion a very great excitement among the

Jews, and that the result would be that serious separations would take place, and that multitudes would be driven from a profession of religion altogether. Still, he does not appear to have anticipated the destruction of any thing but what was fit for nothing better than destruction. Thorough as the winnowing was to be, he appears to have anticipated that all the sound and heavy grain would be secure. "His fan is in his hand, and he will throughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." The Prophet Malachi looked forward to the excitement and agitation which should take place through the preaching and labours of Christ, with the same kind of anticipation. He regarded the Saviour as a *refiner*, and expected the result of his labours to be, not the loss of any good metal, but only of the dross. "The Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the Messenger of the Covenant, whom ye delight in. But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fuller's soap: and he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness." This purifying, refining process, was not to take place in the souls of individuals merely; and it was not to cause a separation of the evil from the good in the character of individuals only, but in society also. The day that was coming, was to be a day that would try men, and ascertain of what kind of metal they were composed, and if they were not composed of silver or gold, cause them to run away as melted dross. "Who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth?"

When we have once found ourselves overcome in times of trial, we ought to direct particular attention to the point in which we failed, and labour to obtain an increase of strength there. We should look to God, and beseech him to remove what is amiss, and to strengthen what is good. And we ought, if we would stand in times of trial, to be exceedingly faithful in times of quiet and prosperity. We should be careful not to indulge the flesh, or trifle with our obligations in any thing; but live a self-denying, serious, and laborious life. We shall then be prepared for whatever may happen. When the winnowing times come, we shall be found like heavy, solid grain, which the wind cannot carry away, and be gathered by God into his own garner: when the refiner kindles his fires, and casts us into the furnace, we shall be like gold, the purer for the fiery process.

And let us endeavour so to conduct ourselves in all our efforts to promote a reform of the church and the conversion of the world, that we may do as much good, and be the occasion of as little harm as possible. We must not refuse to do our duty, for fear of agitation or persecution, but we ought never to cause agitation, or provoke persecution, but when duty requires us to do so. We ought not to allow the church to languish or die of diseases, for fear of giving pain to some of its members by the administration of needful medicine, or the performance of some painful operation; but we ought to choose rather to die than give pain to a member of the church unnecessarily. If the church be slumbering, we ought to awake it; even though by disturbing its slumbers we should bring down upon ourselves its rebukes and censures; but we ought not to alarm or agitate it needlessly. We ought to do every thing which God requires us to do, and we ought to declare every thing which God requires us to declare; but we ought always to endeavour to declare the truth, and do our duty in such a way, that we may bring no unnecessary trial upon any soul of man.

THE PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANS.

"The truth is, as to estate, they were not concerned for more than what would supply the necessities of nature, or the wants of others; not solicitous to get or possess such revenues as might make them the objects either of men's envy or their fear."—*Dr. Cave.*

AN AMERICAN MINISTER.

An active and skilful young minister, while engaged under circumstances of the most promising kind in the village of J—, in the United States, was told of a miller, who, with more than usual of the bravado of profaneness, had repelled every attempt to approach him on the subject of religion, and had daunted all the hopes and efforts of the few serious persons in his vicinity. Among other practices of sinful daring, he uniformly kept his windmill, the most striking object in the hamlet, going on the Sabbath. In a little time, the minister determined to make an effort for the benefit of the hopeless man. He undertook the office of going for his flour the next time himself. "A fine mill," said he, as the miller adjusted his sack to receive the flour; "a fine mill indeed, one of the completest I have ever seen." This was nothing more than just—the miller had heard it a thousand times before; and would firmly have thought it, though he had never heard it once: but his skill and judgment were still gratified by this new testimony, and his feelings conciliated, even towards the minister. "But, oh!" continued his customer, after a little pause, "there is one defect in it!" "What is that?" carelessly asked the miller. "A very serious defect too." "Eh!" replied the miller, turning up his face. "A defect that is likely to counterbalance all its advantages." "Well, what is it?" said the miller, standing straight up, and looking the minister in the face. He went on:—"A defect which is likely to ruin the mill." "What is it?" rejoined the miller. "And will one day no doubt destroy the owner." "And can't you say it out?" exclaimed the impatient miller. "It goes on the Sabbath!" pronounced the minister, in a firm, and solemn, and monitory tone. The astonished man stood blank and thunderstruck; and remained meek and submissive under a remonstrance and exhortation of a quarter of an hour's length, in which the danger of his state and practices, and the call to repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, were fully proposed to him.

A SERVANT.

Whatever station we may be called to fill in society, we may be useful, if we are disposed to be so. By industry, piety, and prudence, we may recommend the religion of Jesus to those who have been previously opposed to it. Many servants have been eminently useful in promoting the spiritual advantage of their superiors. We refer now to the case of the late Rev. John Fletcher, of Madeley, as an instance in point. —When this great man was residing as a tutor in the family of Thomas Hill, Esq., of Tern Hall, in Shropshire, though he felt the importance of religion, he was far from being an open and decided servant of Christ. On one Sabbath evening, a servant coming into his room to make up his fire, observing he was then writing music, looked at him with serious concern, and said, "Sir, I am sorry to see you so employed on the Lord's day." At first his pride was offended, and his resentment excited, at being reproved by a servant; but upon reflection he felt that the reproof was just. He immediately put away his music, and from that hour became a strict observer of the Lord's day.

THE WESLEYANS IN AMERICA.

The last Conference held at Cincinnati, Ohio, voted one hundred and fifty-five against four in favour of restoring Mr. Wesley's rule in relation to buying, selling, and drinking spirituous liquors.—*New York Evangelist.*

AVERAGE MORTALITY OF DRUNKARDS.

It is computed that there are at least six hundred thousand drunkards in the United Kingdom, and that not fewer than sixty thousand of these die annually, in consequence of their intemperance. The following, therefore, may be regarded as a fair average of the mortality occasioned by the use of intoxicating drinks:—In one year, sixty thousand; month, four thousand six hundred and fifteen; week, one thousand one hundred and fifty-three; day, one hundred and sixty-four; hour, six; and every ten minutes, one.

The following article, written by an American, should be read once a month for a while, by all lovers of authority and power, whether in church or in state :

POWER AND THE LOVE OF POWER.

"The love of power is not, in all its forms, a crime. There are indeed various kinds of power, which it is our duty to covet, accumulate, and hold fast. First, there is inward power, the most precious of all possessions; power over ourselves; power to withstand trial, to bear suffering, to front danger; power over pleasure and pain; power to follow our convictions, however resisted by menace or scorn; the power of calm reliance in seasons of darkness and storms. Again, there is a power over outward things; the power by which the mind triumphs over matter, presses into its service the subtilist and strongest elements, makes the wind, fire, and steam its ministers, rears the city, opens a path through the ocean, and makes the wilderness blossom as the rose. These forms of power, especially the first, are glorious distinctions of our race, nor can we prize them too highly.

"There is another power, which is our principal concern in the present discussion. We mean power over our fellow-creatures. It is this which ambition chiefly covets, and which has instigated to more crime, and spread more misery than any other cause. We are not, however, to condemn even this universally.

"There is a truly noble sway of man over man; one which it is our honour to seek and exert; which is earned by well-doing; which is a chief recompense of virtue. We refer to the quickening influence of a good and great mind over other minds, by which it brings them into sympathy with itself. Far from condemning this, we are anxious to hold it forth as the purest glory which virtuous ambition can propose. The power of awakening, enlightening, elevating our fellow-creatures, may, with peculiar fitness, be called divine; for there is no agency of God so beneficent and sublime, as that which he exerts on rational natures, and by which he assimilates them to himself. This sway over other souls is the surest test of greatness. We admire, indeed, the energy which subdues the material creation, or developes the physical resources of a state. But it is a nobler might which calls forth the intellectual and moral resources of a people, which communicates new impulses to society, throws into circulation new and stirring thoughts, gives the mind a new consciousness of its faculties, and rouses and fortifies the will to an unconquerable purpose of well-doing. This spiritual power is worth all others. To improve man's outward condition is a secondary agency, and is chiefly important as it gives the means of inward growth. The most glorious minister of God on earth is he who speaks with a life-giving energy to other minds, breathing into them the love of truth and virtue, strengthening them to suffer in a good cause, and lifting them above the senses and the world.

"We know not a more exhilarating thought, than that this power is given to men; that we can not only change the face of the outward world, and, by virtuous discipline, improve ourselves, but that we may become springs of life and light to our fellow beings. We are thus admitted to a fellowship with Jesus Christ, whose highest end was, that he might act with a new and celestial energy on the human mind. We rejoice to think, that he did not come to monopolize this divine sway, to enjoy a solitary grandeur, but to receive others, even all who should obey his religion, into the partnership of this honour and happiness. Every Christian, in proportion to his progress, acquires a measure of this divine agency. In the humblest conditions a power goes forth from a devout and disinterested spirit, calling forth silently moral and religious sentiment, perhaps in a child, or some other friend, and teaching, without the aid of words, the loveliness and peace of sincere and single-hearted virtue. In the more enlightened classes, individuals now and then rise up, who, through a singular force and elevation of soul, obtain a sway over men's minds, to which no limit can be prescribed. They speak with a voice which is heard by distant nations, and which goes down to future ages. Their names are repeated with veneration by millions, and millions read in their lives and writings a quickening testimony to the greatness of the mind, to its moral strength, to the reality of disinterested virtue. These are the true sovereigns of the earth. They share in the royalty of Jesus Christ. They have a greatness which will be more and more felt. The time is coming, its signs are visible, when this long mistaken attribute of greatness will be seen to belong eminently, if not exclusively, to those, who, by their characters, deeds, sufferings, writings, leave imperishable and ennobling traces of themselves on the human mind. Among these legitimate sovereigns of the world, will be ranked the philosopher, who penetrates the secrets of the universe and of the soul; who opens new fields to the intellect; who gives it a new consciousness of its own powers, rights, and divine original; who spreads enlarged and liberal habits of thought; and who helps men to understand, that an ever-growing knowledge is the patrimony destined for them by the 'Father of their Spirits.' Among them will be ranked the statesman, who, escaping a vulgar policy, rises to the discovery of the true interest of a state; who seeks without fear or favour the common good; who understands that a nation's mind is more valuable than its soil; who inspirits a people's enterprise, without making them the slaves of wealth; who is mainly anxious to originate or give stability to institutions by which society may be carried forward; who confides with a sublime constancy in justice and virtue, as the only foundation of a wise policy and of public prosperity; and, above all, who has so drunk into the spirit of Christ and of God, as never to forget, that his particular country is a member of the great human family, bound to all nations by a common nature, by a common interest, and by indissoluble laws of equity and charity. Among these will be ranked, perhaps on the highest throne, the moral and religious reformer who merits that name; who rises above his times; who is moved by a holy impulse to assail vicious establishments, sustained by fierce passions and inveterate prejudices; who rescues great truths from the corruptions of ages; who, joining calm and deep thought to profound feeling, secures to religion at once enlightened and earnest conviction; who unfolds to men higher forms of virtue than they have yet attained or conceived; who gives brighter and more thrilling views of the perfection for which they were framed, and inspires a victorious faith in the perpetual progress of our nature.

"There is one characteristic of this power which belongs to truly great minds, particularly deserving notice. Far from enslaving, it makes more and more free those on whom it is exercised, and in this respect it differs wholly from the vulgar sway which ambition thirsts for. It awakens a kindred power in others, calls their faculties into new life, and particularly strengthens them to follow their own deliberate convictions of truth and duty. It breathes conscious energy, self-respect, moral independence, and a scorn of every foreign yoke.

"There is another power over men, very different from this; a power, not to quicken and elevate, but to crush and subdue; a power which robs men of the free use of their nature, takes them out of their own hands, and compels them to bend to another's will. This is the sway which men grasp at most eagerly, and which it is our great purpose to expose. To reign, to give laws, to clothe their own wills with omnipotence, to annihilate all other wills, to spoil the individual of that self-direction which is his most precious right—this has ever been deemed by multitudes the highest prize for competition and conflict. The most envied men are those who have succeeded in prostrating multitudes, in subjecting whole communities to their single will. It is the love of this power, in all its forms, which we are anxious to hold up to reprobation. If any crime should be placed by society beyond pardon, it is this.

"This power has been exerted most conspicuously and perniciously by two classes of men; the priest or minister of religion, and the civil ruler. Both rely on the same instrument, that is, pain or terror; the first calling to his aid the fires and torments of the future world, and practising on the natural dread of invisible powers, and the latter availing himself of chains, dungeons, and gibbets, in the present life. Through these terrible applications, man has in all ages, and in almost every country, been made, in a greater or less degree, a slave and machine; been shackled in all his faculties, and degraded into a tool of others' wills and passions. The influence of almost every political and religious institution has been, to make man abject in mind, fearful, servile, a mechanical repeater of opinions which he dares not try, and a contributor of his toil, sweat, and blood, to governments which never dreamed of the general weal as their only legitimate end. On the immense majority of men, thus wronged and enslaved, the consciousness of their own nature has not yet dawned; and the doctrine, that each has a mind, worth more than the material world, and framed to grow for ever by a self-forming, self-directing energy, is still a secret, a mystery, notwithstanding the clear annunciation of it, ages ago, by Jesus Christ. We know not a stronger proof of the intenseness and nefariousness of the love of power, than the fact of its having virtually abrogated Christianity, and even turned into an engine of dominion, a revelation which breathes throughout the spirit of freedom, proclaims the essential equality of the human race, and directs its most solemn denunciations against the passion for rule and empire.

"That this power, which consists in force and compulsion, in the imposition on the many of the will and judgment of one or a few, is of a low order, when compared with the quickening influence over others, of which we have before spoken, we need not stop to prove. But the remark is less obvious, though not less true, that it is not only inferior in kind, but in amount or degree. This may not be so easily acknowledged. He, whose will is passively obeyed by a nation, or whose creed is implicitly adopted by a spreading sect, may not easily believe that his power is exceeded, not only in kind or quality, but in extent, by him who wields only the silent, subtile influence of moral and intellectual gifts. But the superiority of moral to arbitrary sway in this particular, is proved by its effects. Moral power is creative; arbitrary power wastes away the spirit and force of those on whom it is exerted. And is it not a mightier work to create than destroy? A higher energy is required to quicken than to crush, to elevate than to depress, to warm and expand, than to chill and contract. Any hand, even the weakest, may take away life; another agency is required to kindle or restore it. A vulgar incendiary may destroy in an hour a magnificent structure, the labour of ages. Has he energy to be compared with the creative intellect, in which this work had its origin? A fanatic of ordinary talent may send terror through a crowd; and by the craft, which is so often joined with fanaticism, may fasten on multitudes a debasing creed. Has he power to be compared with him, who rescues from darkness one only of these enslaved minds, and quickens it to think justly and nobly in relation to God, duty, and immortality? The energies of a single soul, awakened by such an influence, to the free and full sense of its powers, may surpass in their progress, the intellectual activity of a whole community, enchained and debased by fanaticism or outward force. Arbitrary power, whether civil or religious, if tried by the only fair test, that is, by its effects, seems to have more affinity with weakness than strength. It enfeebles and narrows what it acts upon. Its efficiency resembles that of darkness and cold in the natural world. True power is vivifying, productive, builds up, and gives strength. We have a noble type and manifestation of it in the sun, which calls forth and diffuses motion, life, energy, and beauty. He who succeeds in chaining men's understandings and breaking their wills, may indeed number millions as his subjects. But a weak, puny race, are the products of his sway, and they can only reach the stature and force of men by throwing off his yoke. He who, by an intellectual and moral energy, awakens kindred energy in others, touches springs of infinite might, gives impulse to faculties to which no bounds can be prescribed, begins an action which will never end. One great and kindling thought from a retired and obscure man, may live when thrones are fallen, and the memory of those who filled them obliterated, and, like an undying fire, may illuminate and quicken all future generations.

"We have spoken of the inferiority and worthlessness of that dominion over others which has been covetted so greedily in all ages. We should rejoice could we convey some just idea of its moral turpitude. Of all injuries and crimes, the most flagrant is chargeable on him who aims to establish dominion over his brethren. He wars with what is more precious than life. He would rob men of their chief prerogative and glory; we mean of self-dominion, of that empire which is given to a rational and moral being over his own soul and his own life. Such a being is framed to find honour and happiness in forming and swaying himself, in adopting as his supreme standard his convictions of truth and duty, in unfolding his powers by free exertion, in acting from a principle within, from his growing conscience. His proper and noblest attributes are self-government, self-reverence, energy of thought, energy in choosing the right and the good, energy in casting off all other dominion. He was created for empire in his own breast, and woe, woe to them who would pluck from him this sceptre! A mind inspired by God with reason and conscience, and capable, through these endowments, of progress in truth and duty, is a sacred thing; more sacred than temples made with hands, or even than this outward universe. It is of nobler lineage than that of which human aristocracy makes its boast. It bears the lineaments of a Divine Parent. It has not only a physical, but moral connection with the Supreme Being. Through its self-determining power, it is accountable for its deeds, and for whatever it becomes. Responsibility, that which, above all things, makes existence solemn, is laid upon it. Its great end is to confirm itself by its own energy, and by spiritual succours which its own prayers and faithfulness secure, to that perfection of wisdom and goodness, of which God is the original and source, which shines upon us from the whole outward world, but of which the intelligent soul is a truer recipient and a brighter image, even than the sun with all his splendours. From these views we learn that no outrage, no injury, can equal that which is perpetrated by him who would break down and subjugate the human mind; who would rob men of self-reverence; who would bring them to stand more in awe of outward authority than of reason and conscience in their own souls; who would make himself a standard and law for his race, and shape, by force or terror, the free spirits of others after his own judgment and will.

"All excellence, whether intellectual or moral, involves, as its essential elements, freedom, energy, and moral independence, so that the invader of these, whether from the throne or the pulpit, invades the most sacred interest of the human race. Intellectual excellence implies and requires these. This does not consist in passive assent, even to the highest truths, or in the most extensive stores of knowledge acquired by an implicit faith, and lodged in the inert memory. It lies in force, freshness, and independence of thought, and is most conspicuously manifested by him, who, loving truth supremely, seeks it resolutely, follows the light without fear, and modifies the views of others by the patient, strenuous exercise of his own faculties. To a man thus intellectually free, truth is not, what it is to passive multitudes, a foreign substance, dormant, lifeless, fruitless, but penetrating, prolific, full of vitality, and ministering to the health and expansion of the soul. And what we have said of intellectual excellence is still more true of moral. This has its foundation and root in freedom, and cannot exist a moment without it. The very idea of virtue is, that it is a free act, the product or result of the mind's self-determining power. It is not good feeling, infused by nature or caught by sympathy; nor is it good conduct into which we have slidden through imitation, or which has been forced upon us by another's will. We ourselver are its authors in a high and peculiar sense. We indeed depend on God for virtue, for our capacity of moral action is wholly his gift and inspiration, and without his perpetual aid this capacity would avail nothing. But his aid is not compulsion. He respects, he cannot violate that moral freedom, which is his richest gift. To the individual, the decision of his own character is left. He has more than kingly power in his own soul. Let him never resign it. Let none dare to interfere with it. Virtue is self-dominion, or what is the same thing, it is self-subjection to the principle of duty, that highest law in the soul. If these views of intellectual and moral excellence be just, then to invade men's freedom is to aim the deadliest blow at their honour and happiness, and their worst foe is he who fetters their reason, who makes his will their law, who makes them tools, echoes, copies of himself.

"Perhaps it may be objected to the representation of virtue as consisting in self-dominion, that the Scriptures speak of it as consisting in obedience to God. But these are perfectly compatible and harmonious views; for genuine obedience to God is the free choice and adoption of a law, the great principles of which our own minds approve, and our own consciences bind on us; which is not an arbitrary injunction, but an emanation and expression of the Divine Mind; and which is intended throughout to give energy, dignity, and enlargement, to our best powers. He, and he only, obeys God virtuously and acceptably, who reverences right, not power; who has chosen rectitude as his supreme rule; who sees and reveres in God the fulness and brightness of moral excellence, and who sees in obedience the progress and perfection of his own nature. That subjection to the Deity, which, we fear, is too common, in which the mind surrenders itself to mere power and will, is any thing but virtue. We fear that it is disloyalty to that moral principle, which is ever to be reverenced as God's vicegerent in the rational soul.

"We have aimed to show the guilt of the love of power and dominion, by showing the ruin which it brings on the mind, by enlarging on the preciousness of that inward freedom which it invades and destroys. To us, this view is the most impressive; but the guilt of this passion may also be discerned, and by some more clearly, in its outward influences; in the desolation, bloodshed, and woe of which it is the perpetual cause. We owe to it almost all the miseries of war. To spread the sway of one or a few, thousands and millions have been turned into machines, under the name of soldiers, armed with instruments of destruction, and then sent to reduce others to their own lot by fear and pain, by fire and sword, by butchery and pillage. And is it light guilt to array man against his brother; to make murder the trade of thousands; to drench the earth with human blood; to turn it into a desert; to scatter families like chaff; to make mothers widows, and children orphans; and to do all this for the purpose of spreading a still gloomier desolation, for the purpose of subjugating men's souls, turning them into base parasities, extorting from them a degrading homage, humbling them in their own eyes, and breaking them to servility as the chief duty of life? When the passion for power succeeds, as it generally has done, in establishing despotism, it seems to make even civilization a doubtful good. Whilst the monarch and his court are abandoned to a wasteful luxury, the peasantry, rooted to the soil and doomed to a perpetual round of labours, are raised but little above the brute. There are parts of Europe, Christian Europe, in which the peasant, through whose sweat kings and nobles riot in plenty, seems to enjoy less, on the whole, than the untamed Indian of our forests. Chained to one spot, living on the cheapest vegetables, sometimes unable to buy salt to season his coarse fare, seldom or never tasting animal food, having for his shelter a mud-walled hut, floored with earth or stone, and subjected, equally with the brute, to the rule of a superior, he seems to us to partake less of animal, intellectual, and moral pleasures, than the free wanderer of the woods, whose step no man fetters; whose wigwam no tyrant violates: whose chief toil is hunting, that noblest of sports; who feasts on the deer, that most luxurious of viands; to whom streams as well as floods pay tribute; whose adventurous life gives sagacity; and in whom peril nourishes courage and self-command. We are no advocates for savage life. We know that its boasted freedom is a delusion. The single fact that human nature, in this wild state, makes no progress, is proof enough that it wants true liberty. We mean only to say, that man, in the hands of despotism, is sometimes degraded below the savage; that it were better for him to be lawless, than to live under lawless sway.

"It is the part of Christians to look on the passion for power and dominion with strong abhorrence; for it is singularly hostile to the genius of their religion. Jesus Christ always condemned it. One of the most striking marks of his moral greatness, and of the originality of his character, was, that he held no fellowship, and made no compromise with this universal spirit of his age, but withstood it in every form. He found the Jews intoxicating themselves with the dreams of empire. Of the prophecies relating to the Messiah, the most familiar and dear to them were those which announced him as a conqueror, and which were construed by their worldliness into a promise of triumphs to the people from whom he was to spring. Even the chosen disciples of Jesus looked to him for this good. 'To sit on his right hand,' or in other words, to hold the most commanding stations in his kingdom, was not only their lurking wish, but their open and importunate request. But there was no passion on which Jesus frowned more severely than this. He taught, that to be great in his kingdom, men must serve, instead of ruling, their brethren. He placed among them a child as an emblem of the humility of his religion. His most terrible rebukes fell on the lordly, aspiring Pharisees. In his own person, he was mild and condescending, exacting no personal service, living with his disciples as a friend, sharing their wants, sleeping in their fishing boat, and even washing their feet; and in all this he expressly proposed himself to them as a pattern, knowing well that the last triumph of disinterestedness is to forget our own superiority, in our sympathy, solicitude, tenderness, respect, and self-denying zeal for those who are below us. We cannot, indeed, wonder that the lust of power should be encountered by the sternest rebukes and menace of Christianity, because it wages open war with the great end of this religion, which is the elevation of the human mind. No corruption of this religion is more palpable and more enormous, than that which turns it into an instrument of dominion, and which makes it teach that man's primary duty is to give himself, a passive material, into the hands of his minister, priest, or king."

W. E. C.

A HYMN OF PRAISE.

O Lord my God, I will give thanks unto thee for ever.

God of my life, through all my days,
My grateful powers shall sound Thy praise;
My song shall wake with opening light,
And cheer the dark and silent night.

When anxious cares would break my rest,
And griefs would tear my throbbing breast,
Thy tuneful praises, raised on high,
Shall check the murmur and the sigh.

When death o'er nature shall prevail,
And all the powers of language fail,
Joy through my swimming eyes shall break,
And mean the thanks I cannot speak.

But O, when that last conflict's o'er,
And I am chain'd to earth no more,
With what glad accents shall I rise,
To join the music of the skies.

Soon shall I learn the exalted strains
Which echo through the heavenly plains;
And emulate, with joy unknown,
The glowing Seraphs round the throne.

The cheerful tribute will I give,
Long as a deathless soul shall live:
A work so sweet, a theme so high,
Demands and crowns eternity.

VAIN CURIOSITY.

"It is good to leave off learning, where God hath left off teaching; for they which have an ear, where God hath no tongue, hearken not unto God, but to the tempter, as Eve did to the serpent." H. S.

"To what a mournful extent is the history of human governments a record of wrongs! How much does the progress of civilisation consist in the substitution of just and humane, for barbarous and oppressive laws!"

W. E. C.

TEMPERANCE AND LUXURY.

One of the commonest arguments in favour of the use of luxuries is, that it encourages trade. "Consider the number of persons that get their bread by these things," say the advocates of luxury. "There are thousands and millions," say they, "that live by nothing else." They contend that the use of luxuries is a great benefit to society,—that the abandonment of luxuries would prove a serious evil,—they would, in short, fain have us to believe that if luxuries were laid aside, a great part of the human family would have to die of want. This is the doctrine of such men as Gibbon, and Hume, and Adam Smith, and a number of other political economists of the infidel school. They know that indulgence in luxuries is forbidden by the Gospel, and they know that if they can make men believe luxury to be useful, and a homely, self-denying kind of life to be injurious, they will be able to lessen men's respect for the Gospel, and destroy their belief of its truth and divinity.

But infidels are entirely wrong in this matter, as well as in most others. The use of luxuries is not friendly to trade; it is not friendly to the interests of the working classes: we do not keep men alive by using luxuries; nor would people, by acting on the principles of the Gospel on this subject, either injure trade, or take away from people the means of life. The use of luxuries is opposed to the interests of trade, and tends to injure the working classes. It is, in fact, one of the greatest evils by which society is afflicted; and if men generally would abandon all luxurious indulgences, and act on the principles which we advocate,—the self-denying principles of the Gospel,—they would confer on society, both in this and in other countries, an inestimable blessing.

That we may be the better able to judge how the use of luxuries operates, it may be well to examine a few instances of luxurious indulgence. The principal luxury in China, I understand, is opium. The people in China eat and smoke opium much in the same manner as people in this country chew and smoke tobacco. At least this was the practice in China some time ago; and I suppose it is the practice yet, so far as the people can do it without fear of punishment. By indulgence in this luxury, vast multitudes of the Chinese have ruined their constitutions, and brought themselves to a premature death. They have, nevertheless, their excuses for using opium, and one of these excuses will probably be, the benefit which is thus conferred on the multitudes who manufacture and sell the drug. At least it is certain, they *might* use this excuse, with as much reason as men use it in our own country. "Look," they might say, "what multitudes we keep in employment by the use of opium: there are millions of people in Hindostan, who get their bread by nothing else but by cultivating the poppy, and manufacturing opium, and if we were all to lay the use of opium aside, we should throw them all out of employment at once, and reduce them to absolute want and wretchedness." But what is the truth of the case? Is it true that millions of the Hindoos live by cultivating the poppy, and making opium, and that if the use of opium were given up, the poor Hindoos would be left utterly destitute? No such thing. The Hindoos do *not* live by growing and preparing opium; they suffer very grievously in consequence of the trade in opium. The Hindoos would not be left destitute if the demand for opium should cease; the probability is, that they would be greatly benefitted thereby.

I will endeavour to explain how the use of opium by the Chinese operates on the Hindoos. In consequence of the great demand for opium, the poor Hindoos are required by their rulers, who get a great share of the profits resulting from the trade, to devote such a proportion of their land to the cultivation of the poppies, and to furnish, each one according to the quantity of ground in his possession, so much opium yearly. The consequence is, that nearly all their best land, which should be occupied in growing useful grain and fruits, is occupied with the growth of poppies, and the principal part of their time, which should be spent in cultivating and manufacturing things truly useful, is spent in attending to the poppies, and in preparing the opium. Hence it comes to pass, that they have generally not more than one-half or one-third the quantity of useful food to live upon, that they ought to have. Instead of having abundance of every thing needful, they have little else but a small quantity of rice, which grows in the marshy places. Even in their best years they are in great straits, and if at any time a year of scarcity or famine comes between, they perish by hundreds of thousands, and even by millions, of absolute starvation. As many as two or three millions of human beings, if I recollect right, have thus perished of want in one single year. The poor creatures were seen lying dead and dying along the wayside in great numbers: they had fallen down on their way from one town to another in search of a little food, and had breathed their last before they could find relief. Men, women, and children, in all the agonies of extreme hunger, were crawling out of their miserable dwellings, and lifting up their withering arms and mournful voices, imploring, with wild looks and howlings of despair, a little bread, or a few grains of rice, to save them from death; and there was no one to afford them relief. And there they were left, groaning and languishing, till hunger, by his slow, agonizing tortures, put a horrible end to their existence.

And this is the way in which the Chinese support the Hindoos, by using the luxury of opium. They first cause the principal part of their best land to be occupied by the growth of poppies, and then they cause the principal part of their time and strength to be taken up with cultivating the poppy and preparing the opium, and so cause them to be left with but one-third or one-half of what is needful for them, even in their better years, and in years of scarcity and famine, with not sufficient to save the poor people from absolute starvation. Suppose the use of opium to be given up, and the whole trade in opium to cease, what would be the consequence? Would the poor Hindoos be injured thereby? How could they? They would have no less rice; and they would have no less fish. To say the least, they would have all the means of sustenance that they have at present. But this is not all: they would have much more. They would have all the ground, which is now occupied in growing poppies, for the growth of various kinds of useful grain and fruits; and they would have the time and strength which they spend, under the present system, in growing and preparing opium, for growing and preparing things useful for food and raiment, and for the improvement of their minds in knowledge and piety. They might not only have sufficient of every needful thing for themselves, but abundance with which to supply the lack of other lands. This is the way in which the disuse of luxury by the Chinese would be likely to affect the Hindoos.

And it is the same with respect to other luxuries. One of the commonest luxuries in our country, as well as in America, and in most of the countries of Europe, is tea. The use of tea, by so great a part of the human race, has a similar effect upon the Chinese, as the use of opium by the Chinese has upon the Hindoos. In the first place the tea plant takes up a great part of the land of the Chinese, so that the people have not sufficient land to grow things necessary for food. Nay, so scarce is land in some places, that whole streets or towns are built upon the rivers, and people live in their floating houses all their life through. Then the gathering and preparing of the tea takes so much of their time, that they have not the opportunity of cultivating, as they ought, the portion of land that is left for the production of food. They have to pluck every leaf separately, and roll it up with their fingers, and they have to fan it all the time it is drying, that it may be nice and crisp. This loss of time and this waste of land, produce the same effects in China as in India. The people have not sufficient to support them even in the best years, and when a partial famine comes, they perish by multitudes. Malcolm, who visited China as a deputation from the American Baptist Missionary Society, represents the condition of the people there as being most deplorable. He says that he saw a number of men lying in the market-place dying and dead, from absolute want; and he also says, that what he saw was a common thing. The poor people, he says, go round begging for bread so long as they can get any, and when they can procure no more, they lie down in the market-place, or at the head of the streets, and die; and this is a daily occurrence. And W. Barrow says, that in one city alone, nine thousand little helpless children are cast out to perish every year by their own parents; and there is reason to believe that the great reason is, the parents have not the means of rearing and supporting them. And this is the effect which our use of tea has upon the poor Chinese. This is the way in which they live by our use of luxuries. This is the way in which our use of luxuries furnishes them with employment and the means of subsistence. The truth is, that instead of *living* by our use of their teas, they are *dying* thereby: instead of furnishing them with the means of subsistence and comfort, we are plundering, and torturing, and destroying them. The opium which the Chinese consume, is the life and blood of the Hindoos: and the tea which Americans and Europeans consume, is the life and blood of the Chinese. Every man and woman that drinks tea as a luxury, is, whether he knows it or not, an accomplice in the robbery and destruction of thousands or millions of his fellow-creatures every year. And every man or woman that uses tea, may, by giving up the luxury, contribute something towards feeding, and clothing, and furnishing with every earthly and every spiritual blessing, millions on millions. If tea were laid aside altogether, the Chinese would have land enough, both for purposes of building and for the growth of vegetables, grain, and fruits; and they would have time sufficient both for cultivating their fields, and for manufacturing and preparing the produce of their fields for every useful purpose. There would be nothing to prevent them, if they would pursue a proper course, from having every thing needful to their welfare and comfort in abundance. They might build comfortable houses; they might furnish them with every thing convenient and useful; they might sit daily at a plentiful table; they might rear their little ones, and furnish them with a good education, as well as with plenty of food; they might have time for the cultivation of their minds, and for every purpose of piety and benevolence; and they might have wherewith to relieve and help the needy among their fellow-men.

The remarks which we have made respecting opium and tea, are applicable to all luxuries. They are applicable to coffee, to tobacco, to snuff, to intoxicating drinks, to ornaments, to all kinds of extravagance in eating and drinking, and to excesses of all kinds. Most of these luxuries take up a portion of ground for their production, and all of them take up a great deal of men's time, and care, and strength. The ground that is devoted to the growth of tobacco, might be producing wheat, or rice, or other useful things, to satisfy the wants of the perishing; and the time that is spent in cultivating it and preparing it for use, might be spent in useful labour for promoting the improvement and welfare of the human race at large. The ground that is occupied by the production of grain and fruit for intoxicating drinks alone, and the time and strength that are spent in making and selling them, are immense. I have seen it asserted in print, even by the enemies of Teetotalism themselves, that more grain went through the kiln, than through the mill; or, in other words, that more grain was used for intoxicating drinks than for bread. Whether this be correct or not, I cannot tell, but I see no great reason to disbelieve it. Forty millions of bushels of barley alone, I understand, are used for intoxicating drinks in this country alone every year. Besides the barley thus consumed, there is a vast quantity of oats, potatoes, apples, pears, and various other kinds of fruits converted into intoxicating drinks. Suppose it to be true, that the quantity of grain converted into intoxicating drink, is greater than the quantity made into bread, and bear in mind, in addition to this, the quantities of potatoes and fruits converted into intoxicating drink: think also of the strength and time that are spent in growing these vast quantities of grain and fruit, and in turning them into intoxicating drinks, and then say, whether the use of luxuries be a good thing for our country or not. Suppose all the grain and fruits that are converted into intoxicating drinks to be made into bread, and we should have more than twice the quantity of bread that we have at present. In consequence of the use of this one luxury, intoxicating drink, the people of this country have not one-half the bread that they might have. And yet people talk about the multitudes that are supported by the use of luxuries, and about the want and ruin in which the poor persons that are employed in producing articles of luxury would be involved, if luxuries were to be laid aside. It is all error and delusion from beginning to end. The truth is just on the contrary side. You do not support people by your use of luxuries,—you plunder and oppress them. It is not temperance, but luxury, that is the great parent of want and ruin. If all were to leave off the use of intoxicating drinks, the wants of all our suffering population might be supplied, and a vast surplus be left to supply the wants of other countries, or to be applied to general objects of benevolence. The adoption of temperance principles could not cause want and ruin. If every person in the country were to give up the use of intoxicating drinks this day, it could do no harm to the country generally. Some individuals would suffer, but other individuals would be benefitted, and the country at large would be a great gainer. The disuse of intoxicating drinks would not lessen the quantity of food and raiment in the kingdom. It would not lessen the number of houses, or injure the quality of our furniture. There would still be as much bread, and as many houses, and as much of every thing that is really serviceable as at present. There would be more. There would be a much *greater* quantity of potatoes and fruits; and the quantity of barley that would be at our service would be immense. I know that it would be a little time before the provisions would find their way into some people's houses. The brewer, the beershop keeper, the maltster, the distiller, and the spirit-merchant, would not all get their share of the good things in the country for the first few days; but this inconvenience would soon be remedied, If people were to give up the use of luxuries from Christian principle, and it is that which we advocate, they would not suffer any one to be long without his share of what the country might afford. And it would not be long before maltsters, and brewers, and distillers, and spirit-sellers, would turn their hands to some useful employment, and their capital to some useful trade; and they would thus, while helping themselves and their families to things needful, be sharing the labours, and lightening the toils of their fellow-men. After the first year the amount of useful grain and fruits would be almost doubled, and the comfort of the nation improved beyond conception.

Examine into the influence of luxury in any of its branches, and it will be found that the infidel pretence, that luxury is a public benefit, is as false as it can be. Take luxury in dress, and luxury in building. Suppose the principle of luxury in these things to be carried out to its fullest extent. Suppose the demand for ribbands, feathers, lace, artificial flowers, brooches, necklaces, ear-rings, and similar things, to be so great as to furnish full employment to all the dress-makers, clothiers, tailors, hatters, shoemakers, and others in similar occupations throughout the country: what would be the consequence? Just this: we should all have to go in rags, as long as they would hang upon us; for there would not be a coat, a hat, a gown, a shirt, or a pair of shoes to be got. Suppose the demand for theatres, dancing saloons, race-course stands, church steeples, pyramids, ornamental towers, needless palaces, splendid mansions, and such things as Grey's monument to become so great, as to furnish full and constant employment to all the builders in the country, What would be the result? Why this, it would be impossible to get a school, a chapel, or a plain, comfortable house erected. Suppose the demand for pianofortes, organs, harmonicons, musical boxes, pictures, pleasure boats, and pleasure carriages, chimney ornaments, and all kinds of useless furniture to become so great, as to require the labour of all the carpenters, joiners, and cabinet-makers; we should then be unable to procure chairs, beds, or tables, or any kind of useful furniture. And so in every other branch. Suppose a man, or a number of men, to have money enough to engage all the colliers in the country in digging fish-ponds, cutting down mountains, and getting marble for the erection of splendid monuments; we must then learn to live without coal. I know that what I am supposing is not likely to come to pass, but the supposition is no less reasonable for that; it tends to illustrate the principle under consideration, and that is enough. It shows that the principle of luxury will not bear to be carried out. It proves this, that if the principle of furnishing employment, and supporting the working classes by the use of luxuries were fully carried out, we should have all the working people in the country toiling all day for nothing, and every family in the country left without either a house to live in, a bed to sleep on, a garment to cover them, or a piece of bread to keep them from starvation. And the tendency of the principle is the same, whether it be carried out fully or only partially. Every one that purchases articles of luxury, does so much towards turning the industry of men out of its proper channel,—and towards causing a scarcity of all useful productions of the soil, and of all the useful productions of human skill and labour. Perhaps three-fourths or five-sixths of all the labour and skill of our country, are spent in ministering, in one form or other, to people's love of luxuries. The consequence is, that useful things are twice or three times as dear as they ought to be. There is such a demand for barley, that wheat flour, which ought to be no more than one and sixpence a stone, is sold for three shillings. There is so great a demand for ornaments, that useful articles of dress and furniture cost twice or thrice as much as they ought to do. If men would be content with such things as are truly serviceable, and spend their superfluous wealth in doing good, the labours of the working classes might be reduced one-half, or two-thirds. Every family in the country might have food and raiment in abundance, and every other blessing that man can enjoy, with two or three hours' work a day.

And every one that indulges his love of luxury, is doing so much towards increasing the hours of labour to the working classes, and increasing the price of all useful articles, whether of food, of dress, or of furniture. He is doing his share towards making the rent of a house which ought to be only fifty shillings, five pounds; towards keeping up the price of cloth at ten shillings, which might otherwise be sold for four or five; and towards keeping up the price of a loaf at a shilling, which might otherwise be sold at sixpence or fourpence. He is doing his share towards keeping in ignorance, and want, and wretchedness, the great mass of the whole human family. He is leagued, whether he knows it or not, with the great tyrants, oppressors, and destroyers of mankind. He is a participator in the most wholesale and ceaseless system of plunder, of oppression, and of blood, that ever the world beheld. The robberies and murders of such men as Alexander, Cæsar, and Napoleon, multiplied, black, and horrible as they were, were trifles compared with the robberies and murders perpetrated by men's love of luxury. Besides the millions who annually murder *themselves* by their luxurious indulgences, there are millions more that are cruelly murdered every year by want and excessive toil, and by numberless diseases which their love of luxuries entails upon their fellow-men. And millions that are not outright destroyed, are doomed to spend their lives in difficulty and sorrow. The miseries resulting from luxurious indulgences know no bounds.

And yet there are men who can talk of people being supported by luxury, and about the want and misery that would come upon people if luxuries were laid aside. Philosophers, so called, and politicians, can write books to prove the use of luxuries a general benefit. Their philosophy is foolishness; and their systems of political economy are all vanity and delusion. The best philosophy is the religion of Christ, and the only sound principles of political economy are the precepts of the Gospel. In this, as in all other things, the wisdom of the world is foolishness; and those principles of temperance and self-denial which unbelievers and sensualists, and some misguided professors of the religion of Christ, regard as foolishness, are the only true wisdom. I dare trust in Christ sooner than in all the world. There is more true philosophy in one single sentence of his, than in all the books that earthly philosophers and politicians have ever written since the world began. I hope our readers will be on their guard against the philosophy of the world, and cleave to the simple, self-denying principles of the Saviour. In Christ, or in his religion, are laid up all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. This I say, lest any man should beguile you with enticing words. As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him : rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the truth as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving. Beware lest any man rob you of your spirituality and salvation through philosophy and vain deceit, after the doctrine of men, according to the principles of the world, and not according to Christ. For in Christ dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, and ye are complete in him, furnished with all the philosophy you require. Col. ii. 3, &c.

But is it not better for people to spend their money in luxuries than to hoard it up?

I do not know; I hardly think it is; but there is no necessity for a man to do either the one or the other. The principles for which we contend, are the principles of the Gospel, which are as much against covetous hoarding of money, as against wasting it in luxuries. The doctrine of the Gospel is, that we should *do good* with our property unto all men, and that to the full extent of our power. And there is plenty of room for doing good yet. The followers of Christ have no money to spare yet; the deplorable state of the church and of the world calls for all the wealth and influence that professing christians possess. A million of places of worship are wanted, twelve millions of schools are wanted, and thrice twelve millions of comfortable houses. The principal part of the human race are without decent clothing; innumerable multitudes are but scantily supplied with bread; while hundreds of thousands are dying of absolute want. Books and tracts are wanted without end, and troops of teachers too are wanted to instruct the nations in the use of books, and to lead them forward in the way of improvement.

And as for encouraging trade, if this be your object, you may accomplish your object to far greater advantage by spending your property and time in works of charity, than by spending them in luxuries. Suppose you should spend your wealth in furnishing a supply of Bibles and religious books and tracts to the human family, you would be giving encouragement, directly or indirectly, to almost every useful trade in existence. You would be encouraging the printers' business, and be furnishing employment for a number of additional hands. You would increase the demand for paper, and the paper manufacturer would want more hands. More rags and ropes would be wanted, and more starch and glue, and encouragement would thus be given to persons dealing in these various articles. The printers would want more type, the type-founders would want more metal; and the increased demand for metal would render it necessary to open fresh mines, or else to work the old ones more briskly. More steam engines would be wanted, and more coal, and this would give an impulse to trade in other directions. More buildings would be called for; and more stone and lime, and more iron and timber would be wanted to erect them with; and this would encourage trade and industry in other branches. Then leather and thread would be wanted for binding the books, and this would improve other branches of commerce. Ships would be wanted to carry the books and the teachers to different parts of the earth, and men would be wanted to sell or distribute them, and this also would give additional impulse to trade.

Suppose you should spend your money in building chapels, and schools, or in erecting comfortable houses, and improving the economy of towns, you would be encouraging trade in this way also. You would be furnishing employment for builders, and stone-getters, and brickmakers, and joiners, and wood-cutters, and edge-tool manufacturers, and bellows-makers, and iron-founders, and workers in brass and tin, and lime-burners, and hair-collectors, and tanners, and leather-cutters, and cabinet-makers, and glass-blowers, and men in other branches of business innumerable. If you spend your money in clothing the naked, feeding the hungry, and ministering to the sick, you still afford encouragement to trade. You increase the demand for cloth, for wool, for linen and for cotton, for iron and for leather, for grain and for fruits, for medicines and drugs, and for innumerable other articles of commerce. You have no need to indulge in luxuries to encourage trade; you may encourage it far more effectually by doing good. You may do all the good in the way of furnishing employment, by employing your money in works of charity, that you could do by spending it in luxuries; besides directly contributing to the relief and comfort of multitudes, and to the improvement of the human race at large. The argument in favour of luxury is utterly unsound. The use of luxuries does not so much furnish employment as cause men to spend their labour on that which profits no one, instead of spending it in producing something which would prove of real and general service. The use of luxuries does not furnish men with the means of support; it lessens the means of support; and if the infidel principle which we oppose was fully carried out, it would leave the world without a crumb, and annihilate the whole human race. The adoption of Gospel principles would not occasion any general or permanent inconvenience. If men were thrown out of one kind of employment, they would soon obtain other kinds of employment far better; and their temporary sufferings would be followed by lasting advantages. If the abandonment of luxury were accompanied with the exercise of Christian liberality, it might be done without any inconvenience at all: and this is the plan which the Gospel requires, and this is the plan which we recommend.

The only parties that would be likely to suffer by the disuse of luxuries, are the rich and powerful; and even their sufferings would be more imaginary than real. They would have less money, perhaps, but they might have more happiness. There are persons in India who, by means of the trade in opium, have amassed vast treasures: they have raised themselves to the rank of princes, and are at this hour receiving tens of thousands a year. If the trade in opium should cease, these persons would experience a diminution in their income. Their thousands might be reduced to hundreds, or to tens, and some of them might have to labour for their bread. And if the principles of evangelical reform should generally prevail, numbers that now have thousands a year, would have no more than would be needful to furnish them with food and raiment. But this would be no disadvantage, but a blessing. Those who have such overgrown fortunes, seldom, if ever, know how to use them. Most of them employ them in little else than doing mischief. They destroy their own health, and shorten their own lives, and fill their few days with abundance of miseries. They employ the influence which their wealth gives them, in corrupting the minds and the morals of all around them. They are patrons of vice, and persecutors of truth and virtue, and plagues to the whole country in which they dwell. And shall we indulge in luxuries for fear lest such persons should lose a portion of their wealth and influence? The best thing that could come to them, probably, would be the diminution of their property. The diminution of their property would lessen their power to do mischief, and perhaps be the means of bringing them to their right minds. The loss of their property might be the means of making them holy and happy, and of rendering them the instruments of promoting the welfare of the souls of others. The Gospel will scarce allow us to entertain any hope of their salvation, so long as they are rich: whereas, if they were brought to poverty and want, we might hope to hear of their salvation forthwith.

All God's plans are right; every principle of the Gospel is true; and the only way to happiness, either for individuals, families, or countries, is to receive what He says as true, to submit to what He commands as right, and to spend our days in faithful and persevering obedience to his will.

CHRISTIAN UNION.

We now subjoin a communication, that we have just received, in answer to the questions we proposed on Christian union. As we stated at first, we are anxious to allow a free expression of opinion, if calmly and briefly given, whether in unison with our own or not. The insertion, therefore, of articles on this subject, must by no means be taken for an approval of all the sentiments they contain; though with respect to the article following, we have but little objection to make.

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS PROPOSED IN THE CHRISTIAN INVESTIGATOR, ON CHRISTIAN UNION, PAGE 136.

1. "Ought not the followers of Christ to be one." Yes: the Saviour prays "that they all may be one: as thou Father art in me and I in Thee: that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent me, and the glory which Thou gavest me, I have given them, that they may be one even as we are one."—John xvii. 21, 22.

2. "Did not Christ intend them to be one?" Yes: he says "there shall be *one fold* and *one shepherd*," and though I am not clear in my own mind as to *when* this shall be, I cannot doubt that the Lord *intends*, and has *determined*, that it *must* be.—"There SHALL be one fold and one shepherd."

3. "Are they not commanded in the New Testament to be one?" I cannot, at present, call to mind any *direct command* on this point. There are, however, many passages which ought to have all the authority of commandment. Instance the passage quoted above.—John xvii. 21, 22, compare with John xv. 17, and 1st John iii. 23, 24.

4. "In what respect ought they to be one?" I apprehend it could not be what theologians have termed *mystic*, *invisible* unity for which the Saviour prayed just before he gave his life a ransom for many, for, in this respect, Christians are *already* one. It must have been unity of a totally different character. We are, perhaps, in danger of confounding *unity* and *visible unity* together. Jesus said, not only "one as we are one," but also, "that the world may know," &c. "Now, the union in nature and glory of the Father and of the Son is, *in itself*, to man invisible, but it is seen resulting in testimony. For the Scriptures show us, that the unity of testimony between the Father and the Son, is the result of their fellowship in one nature and one glory. Indeed, the whole of the 17th chapter of John proves, beyond question, that the oneness prayed for in it, is *only* that which is *palpable* and *outward*. Or, in the language of the *Christian Investigator*, "the invisible union of believers with Christ must be manifested to the world, *by a visible union with each* other, in order that *the world* may know them, and know their master."—Page 144.

5. "Is it possible for them all to be brought to hold the same opinions on all points?" I would not say whether this is possible or impossible, but to me it appears that many of the apostolic directions, go on the assumption that *they will not* in the present dispensation. If we all saw "eye to eye," there would be no need of the exhortation, "receive one another, as Christ also has received us to the glory of God;" but this exhortation becomes of pressing importance, when we know how far *real* Christians differ on the points of minor importance, and how apt we are, in consequence of these differences, to withhold the right hand of fellowship, and look upon each other almost as aliens. O, when will the followers of the Lamb agree to merge all their minor differences. When will they cease to "fall out by the way" as they travel to the home of their Father, and thus dash out of the hands of the worldling and the infidel those weapons which have been wielded with such disastrous effect against the cause of the Redeemer. O, that Christians would remember, that the best argument they can bring against the enemies of religion is, to manifest in their walk and conversation all those pure, peaceable, holy, forbearing, self-denying dispositions which that religion enjoins. But further, we may also refer to the 14th chapter of Romans, and 1st to 7th verses of the 15th, as affording presumptive evidence that Christians are not likely to be all of the same mind on all points,

whatever may be the possibility of the case.—Read also, 1st Cor. viii. 7 to 13.

6. "Is it possible for them to be brought to adopt exactly the same modes of worship, or the same plans of benevolent operations in all things?" This question, I think, admits, if not requires, to be answered in both the affirmative and the negative. With respect to the first part, I think, I may safely say, yes. I can see no reason which precludes the possibility of Christians adopting the same modes of worship, providing they will make mutual concessions, and exercise mutual forbearance (which unquestionably they ought to do,) for, then, instead of clinging so closely to the party modes of worship, which now so unhappily prevail, there would be a general looking to Scripture, and a general modelling of the modes of worship to the simple principles of the New Testament, perhaps, most fully developed in the 1st of Cor. 12th chap., and illustrated in detail, in 1st Cor. 14th. And as this subject is less abstruse than many doctrinal points, we may presume, that by a simple searching of the Scriptures, believers would not materially differ upon it.

With regard to the plans of benevolent operations, I judge, that every Christian is left to adopt such, as between God and his conscience, he may think best. It would be impossible to lay down an exact plan by which a Christian should be guided in his benevolent efforts, in the thousand different circumstances into which he may be thrown. He must do all to the glory of God.

7. "Is it possible, or is it desirable, to bring all the followers of Christ to be one under any earthly head?" The church has no need of an "earthly head." As disciples, they have a head already. "Be ye not called Rabbi, for one is your master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren," and though that head be now in heaven, he sends down the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, to be supreme in the church, communicating to it all needful gifts and graces.—John xiv. 16 to 18, with 1st Cor. 12th chapter. The New Testament knows nothing about the church having an "earthly head."

8. "Is that unity for which the church of Rome contends, the unity which Christians ought to seek?" I see nothing in Scripture to countenance the kind of unity they seek; but much to discountenance the means by which they hope to effect it.—See Matt. xxvi. 52, with 2d Cor. x. 4.

9. "Is it desirable to bring about a Union of Christ's followers, under the authority of any human creed or of any human laws or authority?" The less Christians have to do with human creeds, human laws, or human authority, the better. But, to bring about *such* a union of *all* Christ's followers, is impossible. It *cannot* be done by any one man or by any number of men, and God *will not* do it. It is the tenacious adhering to human creeds, laws, and authority, that keeps the professing church of Christ in its present divided state, and so long as there is this hankering after these human creeds, &c., it must, of necessity, remain so. If one man, or any set of men, may draw up one creed and devise one code of laws, we cannot deny the equal right of another to draw up a different creed and a different code of laws. On this principle, divisions cannot fail to multiply. For, from the most Scriptural of human creeds, some will dissent; against the best devised code of human laws, some will demur; and against the most judiciously wielded human authority, some will kick. Has it been a desire to follow out the principles of Scripture, or has it been the desire of enforcing human creeds and laws in the church, by human authority, that has caused so many divisions in the great leading denominations of christendom?

10. "What are the great hindrances to the Union of Christ's followers, which the New Testament requires?" The want of mutual concessions and mutual forbearance among Christians. Every one clings, as for life, to his own party. To such an extent is this true, that we refuse the right hand of fellowship even to an acknowledged brother, because he does not exactly see on some particular point with ourselves, and though there are in almost every congregation some who see the evil of this, they fear to act, lest their

acting should cause uneasiness among their brethren; hence they remain where they are, and in this they excuse themselves, by imagining that of two evils they are choosing the least. But the word of God knows nothing of this balancing of evil, for the Christian is never laid under the necessity of choosing even the *lesser* evil. Again, perhaps, we may extend our hands and our arms to all who may offer themselves, and still be guilty of deterring from our communion the child of God, by adopting some rule which is not plainly laid down in the Scriptures, and to which our brother cannot submit. And now we come to the last question.

11. "What course ought we to pursue, in order to bring about the Union of all believers?" We should throw our human creeds, or human *standards of faith*, "to the moles and to the bats." We should cast out all human laws and human authority that have been introduced into the church, and instead of meeting as Churchmen, as Presbyterians, as Baptists, as Wesleyans, we should meet simply as Christians, receiving all whom the Lord has received, without requiring them to subscribe to any creed, obey any law, or to submit to any authority, but such as are found in Scripture. A Christian ought to have no party name, support no party interest, nor to be in any shape, whatever, a partisan. If this simple principle were adopted, and faithfully and honestly acted on, I cannot see how we should fail of witnessing the closest and the most harmonious unity in the Christian church. For this, let us ardently pray, and diligently labour.—Thus, I have briefly given my thoughts, and shall be happy to read the thoughts of others, on these interesting questions. N. G.

[We must say to the friend that has sent us these answers, that we approve of the method and style of his communication. We shall be glad to find any others that may be sent, written with similar conciseness. What we wish to know is, what our friends think on the subject, and why they think so, and that, in as few, as loving, and as plain words as possible. We may, also, say to our friend "N. G.," that we think very favourably of the *matter* of most of his replies. The fourth, however, we think is expressed somewhat ambiguously. We cannot think that, by the words "one as we are one," our Lord meant "only that which is palpable," or visible; and we are convinced that, our friend himself, does not mean to exclude from his idea of Christian oneness, our mystic or spiritual union in Christ. The answer to the last question also, we think, might have been rendered more complete, if it had suggested the means which should be used to bring Christians to "meet simply as Christians," and thus to *prove* that human standards of faith are altogether unnecessary. What is said about concessions also, might mislead. We ought to concede nothing in opposition to conscience, nor ought we to require others to concede any thing which they believe God to require of them. What is wanted is SALVATION; "*forbearing one another in love.*"

ON LUXURY.

"THE flowing and transitory condition of man's life (says he) calls for a daily reparation of the decays of nature: he, therefore, that looks no further than to minister to the desires of nature, and troubles not himself with vain, anxious thoughts for more than is necessary, lives little less than the life of angels, whilst by a mind content with little, he imitates their want of nothing. For this cause we are commanded to seek only what is enough to keep the body in its due state and temper, and thus to address our prayers to God, 'give us our daily bread:' give us *bread*, not delicacies or riches, not splendid and purple vestures, or rich golden ornaments, not pearls and jewels, silver vessels, large fields and great possessions, not the government of armies, the conduct of wars, and the disposal of nations, not numerous flocks and herds of cattle, or multitudes of slaves and servants, not splendour and gallantry in public, not marble pillars, or brazen statues, or silken carpets, or choirs of music, or any of those things by which the soul is diverted and drawn from more noble and divine thoughts and cares: but only *bread*, which indeed is the true and common staff of man's life."—*Gregory of Nyssa*, A.D. 380

BAXTER'S WAY OF TREATING SLANDERERS.

THERE was scarce ever a better man than Baxter, and there was scarce ever a man that was more abundantly and cruelly reviled. He refused to be of any party but the truth, and the consequence was, that party men of all sides abused him. Some charged him with going too far, and others blamed him for not going farther; and both sides, when they found it impossible to induce him to give up his independence, and commit himself to their party and sectarian interests, joined together to reproach and slander him. Some printed and circulated abusive pamphlets, and others wrote large books against him; while others contented themselves with making and spreading abroad respecting him vile stories. Some called him an Arminian, some a Pelagian, and others charged him with being a Unitarian or Socinian. Some charged him with sedition and rebellion, and others said he was a Papist, while others thought he was worse than any thing that had existed before, and as if they considered that no foul name that they could give him would be so foul as his own, they said he was a *Baxterian*.

Some of Baxter's friends were sadly put about with the slanders that were so ceaselessly, and almost everywhere so diligently circulated respecting him; and they pressed him from time to time to publish a refutation of them. Perhaps they thought that the circulation of so many foul reports respecting him, would lessen or destroy his usefulness, if he published no refutation: or perhaps they were influenced partly by their own selfish feelings, and wished him to publish refutations of the abusive reports and pamphlets which were so zealously and abundantly circulated against him, that they might be able to enjoy his friendship, and co-operate with him in his labours of piety and love, without exposing *themselves* to reproach and persecution. Baxter, however, chose to go on with his great work of enlightening and reforming the church, and of converting and saving the world, and left his reputation to the care of God. Instead of publishing books in refutation of personal reproaches and abuse, he kept pouring from the press new works to alarm and convert the careless world, to direct the churches to the truth, and to arouse them to a sense of their duty. It was while thus malignantly abused that he wrote the rousing and powerful treatise called "*Now or Never*," and as he knew that numbers of his timid friends were looking for an answer to the numberless attacks of his enemies upon his reputation, he wrote, in the preface to the treatise, the following passage. As we thought there was some similarity between the case of Baxter and the case of some of our fellow-labourers in the work of Evangelical Reform, we thought the insertion of the passage in the Investigator might be of some service. Numbers are asking whether they are to look for answers to such and such abusive pamphlets, and to such and such slanderous reports: we wish to answer them in the words of Baxter:—

EXTRACT.

"IT may, the reader will say, be expected, that instead of writing such popular discourses, I should have vindicated myself against the accusations that, in multitudes of libels and pamphlets, are scattered abroad against me. But doth he think that man is seriously a Christian that is not more zealous for God and religion, and the souls of men, than for himself? Have I nothing else to do with my time and labour, but plead a cause of my own, which God will so speedily and effectually plead? Will it not be time enough to be justified at the bar and day of God? I am content that they carry it as they desire till then (were it not more for their own and other men's sakes than mine). Am I like to forsake my life and all for Christ, and endure torment, if I were called to it, if I cannot endure to be reviled and slandered by passionate men? Was it nothing that our Lord would not answer for himself, when he was accused before Pilate? Shall they be able to calumniate under the threatenings of the revenge of heaven, and shall not I be able to be silent under such a promise as Matthew v. 10, 11, 12, "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness sake; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in Heaven, for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." The servant of the Lord must not strive! Our Lord gave us an example of not reviling again when he was reviled! He made himself of no reputation, but endured the cross, and the contradiction of sinners, despising the shame. I confess I think when God's interest and the good of others doth require it, a man should not be wanting in his own defence, and I have long ago written that which will satisfy the impartial: but when I see that it is like to tend to heat, and set more on work, I had rather let men call me all the names they can devise, and voluminously accuse me of any thing that malice can suggest, than do any thing to foment contentions in the church. But if God convince me that it is my duty to detect the calumnies of men; it is a work soon done.

"But what good will it do the world for me to open the numerous untruths that other men have published, or to confute every Script, when all that I converse with are satisfied already, and believe not the reproachers; and all the evidence in the world will not satisfy those that will not read it, or are resolved, by their malice or interest, never to be satisfied?

"For my part, I doubt not but God and their conscience will give them such a confutation as shall be sufficient to them and me to end the controversy.

"My work is to plead the cause of God and holiness against the profane and sensual world, and no further to plead any cause of my own, than is necessary to that. If I must bear the effects of men's displeasure, I had an hundred times rather it were for pleading for holiness, and love, and peace, and concord, against impiety, uncharitableness, and divisions, than for defending myself, upon the account of ceremonies or smaller matters. And if for those I bear it, I doubt not of more comfort at the present, much less do I doubt of a better issue than false accusers can expect. We shall shortly be upon even ground: the time is short; the pleasures of mirth, the triumphs of malice, the sufferings of innocence, are but for a moment. Envy them not so short and dark a day: the judge is at the door that will judge all again, and set all straight, and judge in righteousness. When I am afraid of leaving a noisome and unrighteous world, and ending all my pain and trouble, and being beyond the reach of malice, then I will fear what man can do. Let them keep me out of heaven, or deprive me of my peace and comfort if they can. If they fear not the threatening of God against the malicious and unjust; surely I have less reason to fear their threatening. When they have done their worst to others, let them save themselves from death if they can. I am devoted to God, and I never yet found cause to repent it. I am resolved to use the utmost of my power for the interests of holiness, charity, and peace, and for loyalty to the King, or obedience or patient submission to superiors: and if yet I bear the fruits of fury, let those that insult over sufferers, as if they were therefore guilty or miserable, remember that we could have avoided it if we would, and have found the way of applause and prosperity as well as they: and that no man takes that for his misery which he chuseth! If this kind of preaching or writing offend, could not I have avoided it? I am not in love with sufferings from men, nor will I escape them at the rate of God's displeasure. I shall never think myself in the highest form of Christians, till I am more conformed to the sufferings of Christ, and have endured more than yet I have."

"To espouse a good cause is not enough. We must maintain it in a spirit answering to its dignity. Let no man touch the great interests of humanity, who does not strive to sanctify himself for the work by cleansing his heart of all wrath and uncharitableness, who cannot hope that he is in a measure baptised into the spirit of universal love."

W. E. C.

THE CHRISTIAN'S TRIUMPH.

"What reason then, say you, have we Christians to complain of our sufferings, when we are so fond of persecution; we ought rather to love those who persecute us so sweetly to our heart's content. It is true, indeed, we are not against suffering, when the captain of our salvation calls us forth to suffer; but let me tell you, it is with us in our Christian warfare, as it is with you in yours, we choose to suffer, as you choose to fight: but no man chooses fighting for fighting's sake, because he cannot engage without fear and hazard of life. Yet nevertheless, when the brave soldier finds he must engage, he battles it with all his power, and, if he comes off victorious, is full of joy, (though just before not without his complaints of a military life,) because he has obtained his end, laden with glory, laden with spoil.

"Thus it is with Christians, we enter into battle, when we are cited to your tribunals, there to combat for truth with the hazard of our life. To set up truth is our victory, and the victor's glory is to please his God, and the precious spoil of that victory is eternal life; and this life we certainly win by dying for it, therefore we conquer when we are killed; and being killed are out of the reach of you, and all other vexations for ever.

"Give us now what names you please from the instruments of cruelty you torture us by, call us Sarmenticians and Semaxians, because you fasten us to trunks of trees, and stick us about with faggots to set us on fire; yet let me tell you, when we are thus begirt and dressed about with fire, we are then in our most illustrious apparel. These are our victorious palms and robes of glory, and mounted upon our funeral pile we look upon ourselves in our triumphal chariot."—*Tertullian's Apology*, (A. D. 200.)

JOHN HOWE.

The excellent Mr Howe being at dinner with some persons of fashion, a gentleman expatiated largely in praise of king Charles I. introducing some harsh reflections upon others. Mr Howe, observing that the gentleman mixed many oaths with his discourse, told him that in his humble opinion, he had omitted a singular excellence in the character of that prince. The gentleman eagerly desired him to mention it, and seemed all impatience to know what it was. "It was this, sir," said Mr Howe: "He was never heard to swear an oath in common conversation." The hint was as politely received as given; and the gentleman promised to break off the practice.

The same minister, once conversing with a nobleman, so called, in St. James's Park, who swore profanely in his conversation, expressed great satisfaction in the thought that there is a God who governs the world, who will finally make retribution to all according to their works; and "who, my lord," added he, "will make a difference between him that sweareth, and him that feareth an oath." His lordship immediately answered, "I thank you, sir, for your freedom, I take your meaning, and shall endeavour to make a good use of it." Mr. H. replied, "I have reason to thank your lordship for saving me the most difficult part of the discourse, which is the application."

At another time passing two persons of quality, who were talking with great eagerness, and imprecated curses on each other repeatedly; Mr. H. said to them, taking off his hat in a respectful manner, "I pray God save you both;" for which handsome reproof they immediately returned him thanks.

ON PLEASING MEN FOR THEIR GOOD.

As our neighbour is commanded to love us as himself, we are bound by all lawful means to render ourselves amiable to him, that we may help and facilitate this his love: for to help him in obeying so great a command must needs be a great duty. Though his very sin possess him with prejudice against us, or cause him to distaste us for some indifferent thing, we must, so far as we can lawfully, remove the cause of his prejudice and dislike: though he that hateth us for obeying God, must not be cured by our ceasing to obey him. We are so far from being obliged to displease men by surliness and morosity, that we are bound to pleasing gentleness and brotherly kindness.—*Baxter*.

THE NEPHEWS OF JUDAS, THE LORD'S BROTHER.

"DOMITIAN, the Emperor, being informed that there were yet remaining some of Christ's kindred according to the flesh (the nephews of Judas the brother of our Lord; of the race and posterity of David, which the emperor sought utterly to extirpate) he sent for them, and enquired of them whether they were of the line of David: they answered they were; he asked what possessions and estate they had; they told him they had between them thirty-nine acres of land (to the value of about nine thousand pence) out of the fruits whereof they both paid him tribute, and maintained themselves with their own hard labour, whereto the hardness and callousness of their hands (which they then showed him) bore witness. He then asked them concerning Christ and the state of his kingdom; to which they answered, that his empire was not of this world, but heavenly and angelical, and what should finally take place in the end of the world, when he should come with glory to judge both the quick and the dead, and to reward men according to their works: which, when he heard, despising the men upon the account of their meanness, he let them go without any severity against them."—*Dr. Cave.*

REV. W. GRIMSHAW.

MR. NEWTON, in his "Life of Grimshaw," the justly celebrated minister of Haworth, in Yorkshire, mentions a circumstance which forcibly illustrates his care and influence over his people. He laboured hard to suppress the custom of walking in the fields, between the services, and in the evenings of the Lord's day. Not being fully able to do this in the pulpit, he himself would walk into the fields, to discover and reprove the delinquents. On one occasion, learning that a party were thus met near the village, he disguised himself, and appeared among them. He charged them to stand still, took down their names, and ordered them to attend him on a day and hour which he appointed. They came as punctually as though they had been served with a judge's warrant. He led them into a private room, formed them into a circle, commanded them to kneel down, and prayed for them for a considerable time, with much earnestness, and then concluded the interview by an affecting lecture. He never afterwards had occasion to repeat this friendly discipline.

THE BEST SERVICE WE CAN RENDER TO SOCIETY.

"There are times when the assertion of great principles is the best service a man can render society. The present is a moment of bewildering excitement, when men's minds are stormed and darkened by strong passions and fierce conflicts; and also a moment of absorbing worldliness, when the moral law is made to bow to expediency, and its high and strict requirements are denied, or dismissed as metaphysical abstractions or impracticable theories. At such a season, to utter great principles without passion, and in the spirit of unfeigned and universal good-will, and to engrave them deeply and durably on men's minds, is to do more for the world, than to open mines of wealth, or to frame the most successful schemes of policy." W. E. C.

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EVANGELICAL REFORMER;

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LUKEWARMNESS.

Scarcely any thing is more common than for persons, after their conversion to God, to fall into a state of lukewarmness. When first brought "from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God," their souls are all on fire,—the fervour of their heavenly affections knows no bounds. They love God with their whole heart, and they love all mankind; and to labour for God, and to do good to their fellow-men, is the delight of their life. They come to the means of grace as to a feast, and their souls are fed as with marrow and fatness. The word of life, whether read in their closets, or heard from the pulpit, is sweeter to them than honey or the honey-comb. In the prayer meeting, in the class meeting, in the great congregation, or in their secret retirements, they still are happy, and the cup of their blessedness runs over. Scarcely any thing is difficult or painful to them, that comes in the way of duty. They have a fulness of affection, an ardour of holy zeal, that makes hard things easy, and painful things pleasant. They can adopt the words of the poet with perfect propriety,

> "With thee conversing, we forget,
> All time, and toil, and care;
> Labour is rest, and pain is sweet,
> If thou, my God, art there."

But, after a while, the fervour of their religious affections begins to decline, and their zeal for God and for the salvation of souls, begins to languish. They find less pleasure in the means of grace, and they feel less energy and decision in resisting temptation, and in doing the will of God. Eternal things exert less influence over them, and their souls begin to cleave to the dust, and to lose themselves in worldly thoughts and cares. They still retain the outward form of godliness, but they have lost much of its power. They still have a regard for religion, but they feel that they are not properly under its influence. They have a clear recollection of their former state; they frequently lament that they are so much changed; and at times they labour to recover their former life and fervour; but their efforts are not successful, and they settle down at length into a state of habitual lukewarmness. They still have their names on the church's register, and they still continue to go their usual round of observances, but their souls are comparatively powerless, lifeless,—religion has become much of a form with them, and they may be ranked with those who "have a name to live and are dead."

This has been the case with professors of religion, more or less, from the beginning. At a very early period, some fell into a sickly and languishing state. This appears to have been the case with the Church of Laodicea, previous to the death of the Apostle John. John was directed to write to the minister of the church, saying, "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert either cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth." Rev. iii. 15, 16. We have ourselves seen numbers of persons who, so far as we could judge, were truly converted, who have sunk down into this state of lukewarmness. Their zeal for God, and for the salvation of their fellowmen, has declined, and they have lost much of their concern for the eternal welfare of their own souls. Eternal matters no longer excite in their minds those powerful emotions which they once excited; nor do they exert that powerful influence upon their conduct which they once exerted. They have not fallen into flagrant sins, nor have they broken off their association with the church, but they have lost their life and fervour. They are like Sampson, shorn of their strength, and, with the exception of the name and the form of religion, they are much like other men.

We have reason to fear that a great portion of professing Christians of the present day are in this state of lukewarmness. Great numbers acknowledge themselves to be in this state; they acknowledge that the fervour of their holy affections is almost gone; they complain that instead of things growing better with them, they are worse with them at present, than when they first devoted themselves to the Lord. Lukewarmness has, in fact, spread itself through the church at large, and there are comparatively few, we fear, who have entirely escaped its influence. In many cases whole churches appear to be in a state of lukewarmness; and in some cases, whole denominations appear to have lost their first love. Those disciples of Christ who retain the fervour and zeal of their best days, and who increase in love to God and man, are, we fear, comparatively few.

This is a very serious matter. Lukewarmness is a very great evil. We are given to understand, by the passage already quoted, that lukewarmness is more offensive to God, than entire coldness; that God had rather that men should throw off their profession of religion altogether, than be half-hearted and lukewarm in religion. There are three kinds of characters placed before us, the hot, the cold, and the lukewarm. The hot are those who make religion every thing, who consecrate their time, their property, and all their powers to God without reserve, and who labour to promote God's cause, and to accomplish all God's will, with their whole soul. The cold are the unbelieving and profligate, who look on religion as a fable, or who carelessly and thoughtlessly trample its claims under their feet. They make no profession of religion; they live to please themselves, and their whole life and conversation are one mass of earthliness and folly. The third class are the lukewarm,—such as profess religion, and attend to its observances to some extent, but who live in ease and pleasure, and make religion give place to earthly interests and selfish pleasures. The most offensive to God of all, are the last. God is not pleased with the cold, the openly profane; he is angry with them every day: but his greatest displeasure is with the lukewarm; and the passage in Revelations, chap. iii. 15, 16, gives us plainly to understand, that if men continue in this state of lukewarmness, he will utterly reject them. "I will spue thee out of my mouth."

2. Lukewarmness is a very unreasonable thing. If God deserves to be loved at all, he deserves to be loved with all our heart: if religion deserves to be regarded at all, it deserves to be regarded above all things else. If religion be true, it is every thing, and deserves to engage our whole soul, and to controul and regulate our whole behaviour.

3. Lukewarmness in professors of religion is a hindrance to the conversion of sinners. Sinners cannot believe that religion is a matter of such great importance, when they see so many persons who profess to have experienced its influence, and who ought best to understand its character and its worth, so careless and half-hearted respecting it. They hear preachers *say* that it is a matter of infinite importance, but the lukewarmness of professors appears to say the contrary; and the influence

of what professors *do*, is greater than the influence of all that preachers can *say*.

4. Lukewarmness in professors tends to confirm unbelievers in their infidelity. Infidels know, that if the religion of Christ be true, it is the most important thing in the world: and they imagine that if *they* were heartily persuaded of its truth, they could do no other than make it their first and constant concern. And when they see professors treating it as a matter of secondary importance, when they see them preferring the interests of the world to the interests of Christ, and allowing the affairs of time to exert a greater influence over them than the affairs of eternity, they imagine that professors themselves are not satisfied of the truth of religion, and they next conclude that there is no sufficient evidence of its truth. I know that infidels are foolish in allowing themselves to be thus influenced by the inconsistencies of professors, and I know that their reasonings on the subject are altogether unsound; yet so it is: and I have no doubt but that next to men's natural repugnance to what is good, there is nothing that does so much to harden unbelievers in their infidelity, as the lukewarmness of professing Christians.

5. Lukewarmness tends to destroy the usefulness of the church in every way. When men are lukewarm, they are wanting in the desire to be useful.

When men are lukewarm, they are more forward to give their time and strength to the world than to the cause of God, and to employ their property in obtaining more property, than in promoting the conversion and salvation of souls.

When men are lukewarm they have not the spirit for pious and benevolent enterprizes. They love ease; they shrink from opposition; they fear reproach; and they are unwilling to risk either their property or their reputation in the cause of Christ.

If lukewarm persons *attempt* to do any thing good, they seldom succeed to any great extent. They are fearful, and dare not attempt any thing great. They are wanting in liberality, and are unwilling to make a free use of their property. They do not go about their work with determination and energy, and the world and satan will not give way before them.

There is little to be done in the cause of God, without God's special blessing; and God does not take pleasure in blessing the efforts of the lukewarm.

There is nothing to be done in the work of regenerating the world, without patience and perseverance; and the lukewarm are not the persons to persevere patiently under repeated disappointments and discouragements.

The character and conduct of the lukewarm tend to render their advice and exhortations ineffectual. When they would persuade their neighbours to turn to God, their neighbours are in danger of saying in their hearts, if not with their lips, "Physician, heal thyself."

If they lead a class, they are in danger of being stumbling blocks to their members, rather than helps; and if they turn not their members out of the way, they are in danger of damping their ardour, and reducing them to a state of incurable lukewarmness.

The lukewarm are not likely to do much good in their own families. Even children frequently know, that if persons profess to be religious, they ought to be religious indeed. And when they see their parents treating religion as a matter of secondary moment, and spending the strength of their warmest affections, and the fulness of their vigour and resources, on the world, we cannot wonder if they should fail to be favourably influenced by their example.

A lukewarm preacher can do little good; it need not be wondered at if he does much harm. What can be more inconsistent, than for a person to stand up to preach the Gospel, while he himself is but little excited and influenced by it. Every doctrine in the Gospel, almost every precept of the Gospel, and the whole Gospel history must condemn such a preacher. It is impossible that such a person can preach with power; it is impossible that what he says should go to the heart with unction and authority. A lukewarm person *cannot* preach the Gospel. If he were to preach the Gospel fully, he would himself become another man, or else hold himself up to his hearers for their general rebuke and reprobation. Many parts of the Gospel are of such a nature, that a lukewarm person must either overlook them and refuse to think of them, or be covered with shame and filled with remorse. How can a lukewarm minister preach the whole truth respecting the boundless love of God and of Christ in the redemption of the world? How can he preach on the tremendous evil of sin, of the terrors of God's displeasure, of the miseries of guilt and of perdition, of the unspeakable importance and blessedness of religion, of the shortness and uncertainty of life, of the nearness of death and eternity, of the solemn and terrible proceedings of the last day, and of the wonders and mysteries of blessedness that await the saints in heaven? What can the lukewarm minister say about the example of Christ, the example of the Apostles, the example of the first Christians, or even of the examples of John the Baptist, and of the saints of God under the Old Testament dispensation? There was not much of lukewarmness in them.—They were all zealous; and many of them exceedingly zealous for the Lord of Hosts. What can he say of Moses and Elijah, who preferred the honour of God and the prosperity of his cause, to life itself, and who felt life itself a burden, so long as God's cause seemed to languish?—What can he say of the whole multitude, whose names we cannot mention, who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens; who were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection; and others who endured trials of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment; who were stoned, sawn asunder, tortured, and slain with the sword: who wandered about in sheep skins and goat skins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; who wandered in deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth, and who, under all these trials, still proved faithful to God, and burned with unquenchable zeal for his glory? What can the lukewarm preacher say of zeal, of diligence, of perpetual growth in grace, of going on to perfection, of stretching with all his might forward to the mark for the prize of his high calling,—of doing good as he has opportunity,—of being zealous of good works,—of being stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord,—of working out his salvation with fear and trembling,—of giving diligence that he may be found of God in peace, without spot and blameless,—of giving all diligence, to add to his faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge temperance, to temperance patience, to patience godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness, to brotherly kindness charity, and that these things may not only be in him, but abound, that he may abound in every good work? What will he say of these things, I say, and what will he say of a hundred other things, all equally opposite to his character and proceedings? We cannot wonder if he altogether pass these subjects by without notice; and if he should not pass them by, if he speak of them, we may expect him to put them in such a light, and to speak of them in such a manner, as to rob them of their force and meaning. This is the case with lukewarm preachers: they suffer the principal part of the Gospel to fall into forgetfulness, and even those parts of the Gospel which they continue to notice, they treat in such a way as to make it nothing more than much empty, useless talk. The lukewarmness of ministers has this effect at this time, and it has had this effect for ages past. Take pulpits generally, and there is not one half of them, we fear, from which the full Gospel is preached. That which generally passes for the Gospel, and that which by general consent has come to be termed, for matter, *Gospel* or *Evangelical* preaching, is little more than two or three of the "first principles of the doctrine of Christ;" a few limbs, cruelly and unnaturally severed from the great body of Gospel truth, and which, by being thus severed from the rest of the body, are deprived of all their use, and power, and beauty. Hence preaching generally has lost its efficacy, and degenerated into a weary useless form. We have reason to fear that a great part of the preaching of the present day, has become, in consequence of the lukewarmness of ministers, a curse instead of a blessing; a hindrance to the conversion of sinners and the improvement of believers, instead of a help. Men wonder why preaching produces so little good at the present day, compared with what it produced in the days of Wesley, and in the days of the Apostles; but to me the reason seems plain enough. The Apostles and the leading preachers in the days of John Wesley, were different men from the great mass of preachers of the present day: they were zealous men; full of love to God and love to man. They not only preached the Gospel more freely and more fully than it is generally preached at the present day, but they preached it by their lives; they were decided, thorough-going followers of their Saviour. Let preachers in our day be as holy and zealous as Wesley, and Fletcher, and Whitfield, and the Apostles, and let them preach the pure, full Gospel of the Saviour, and preaching will then be as effectual now as formerly. If ministers and churches had the spirituality and zeal of the Apostles and of the early followers of the Saviour, it would not be long before the influence of their labours and examples would be felt to the ends of the earth.

Again; the lukewarm are unhappy. They are amongst the unhappiest of mankind. They can neither enjoy the pleasures of religion nor the pleasures of sin. The man that has no regard for religion, that makes no profession of religion, that has succeeded in shutting out almost all thoughts of religion from his soul, can find some kind of a pleasing portion in sin, poor as it is; but the lukewarm can enjoy nothing fully. They cannot enjoy the pleasures of religion. They have no settled peace of mind. They have not the testimony of a good conscience; their consciences reprove them every day. They have not the assurance of God's favour; they have the assurance rather that God is angry with them, and that unless they speedily repent and do their first works, he will cast them away for ever. They find little satisfaction in prayer. Their hearts do not relish prayer, and when they attempt to pray, they cannot pray with confidence. They have no pleasure in the sacred Scriptures. They do not read them often, and when they do read them, their souls do not relish them. They have not the pleasures of holy love; for their love to God, their love to God's people, and their love of mankind have no fervour; they are little better than a name. They lose the pleasures of doing good, for they either do no good, or they do so little, or they do it with so much grudging, that it is a cross and trouble to them. They have so much religion left, that they dare not neglect its duties altogether, and yet they have so little religion, that every thing they do is a task and a burden to them. They have little comfort from their faith, for their faith is feeble, and so far as it operates, it tends chiefly to disturb and torment them. They lose the pleasures of hope, for though they have not given up all hope, yet their hope is almost dead. They have no bright prospects of glory, no rich enrapturing foretastes of eternal blessedness. The spiritual and eternal world is like a dream to them; earth seems to them the only world of substance; the world unseen seems but a world of shadows. Yet have they so much thought of God and of eternity, that they cannot fully give themselves up to the flesh. They have faith and feeling enough to make them shrink from the profligacy of some of their neighbours, and yet they have not sufficient to bring them into delightful fellowship with God and Christ. They have faith and feeling sufficient left to render them incapable of enjoying freely the pleasures of sin, and yet they have not sufficient to bring into their souls the rich and satisfying pleasures of religion. They have not religion sufficient to make them happy, and yet they have sufficient to make them miserable.

Such is the miserable condition of the lukewarm. I have little doubt but some of my readers feel themselves in this miserable condition; and even those who have not, as yet, fallen into this miserable state, may feel themselves in danger of falling into it. My next endeavour therefore shall be to point out the causes of lukewarmness, and the means by which lukewarmness may be prevented or cured, in order that all who may be wishful to escape it, may have the way of escape plainly opened before them.—*See next number.*

A REMARKABLE INTERPOSITION OF DIVINE PROVIDENCE.

In the early part of the life of the celebrated Dr. Joseph Stennet, prior to his becoming a Christian minister, he was employed as a clerk in a manufactory at Abergavenny, in Monmouthshire. During his residence at this place, a poor man, whose business it was to prepare charcoal for the manufactory, was, by a heavy fall of snow (a circumstance very common in that mountainous country) prevented from pursuing his usual occupation, and reduced to a state of the utmost distress. His stock of provisions was entirely expended; the snow rendered it impossible for him to repair to the neighbouring village; and his children were crying for bread. In this dreadful exigency the poor man acted the part of a Christian. He retired to his chamber, and poured out his heart to God, earnestly entreating, either that he would remove the craving appetites of his children, or afford him the means of satisfying their wants. Soon after his return from prayer, the children went quietly to bed; and about three o'clock in the morning he was roused from his repose by a knocking at his door. Upon opening the door he found a person on horseback, who said he was sent by a Mr. Jones, who resided in the neighbourhood, with a sack of provisions. The good man was not curious to inquire into circumstances, but considered the event as a peculiar interposition of Providence in answer to prayer. Mr. Stennet knowing that the man was in low circumstances, when he had an opportunity of seeing him again at the manufactory, inquired how he had fared during the severity of the season; when the good man informed him of the circumstances which have just been related. Some time after, as Mr. Stennet was standing by an inn in the town, a gentleman rode up to the door, whom the landlord accosted by the name of Jones. He was immediately struck with the idea that this was the person who had been the instrument of supplying the wants of the poor man; and upon inquiring, found his conjecture verified. He retired with the gentleman into the inn, and was then informed of the peculiar circumstances which led to the above transaction. Mr. Jones told him that he had been meditating on the goodness of God towards himself, till he felt his gratitude rise to a higher pitch than usual, and immediately resolved to do what he could to promote the glory of God. He retired to bed, fell asleep, and dreamed that the poor man, who has just been referred to, was in distressed circumstances, and his children in want of bread. At the same time a voice seemed to say, "Help the poor collier." He therefore determined to send him assistance on the morrow. He went to sleep again; and again the dream, as well as the admonition, was repeated, and he again formed the same resolution. The same circumstances were reiterated a third time; upon which he arose from his bed, took a sack, filled it with whatever eatables he could find, and dispatched a servant on horseback with them to the poor man's house. Thus did God answer the prayer of the destitute, and appeared a present help in time of need. From the circumstances just related, we discover the excellency of prayer, and the superintending providence of God. How true is the declaration of Soloman, "Whoso trusteth in the Lord, happy is he."

An aged Christian, who formerly lived in Saddleworth, was in very poor circumstances, and was once interrogated respecting the manner in which he should obtain a living. In reply to the question which was proposed, he answered, "I believe that the Lord would sooner turn the world upside down, than suffer me to lack any thing that is truly necessary." Such is the confidence of those whose faith is founded on the Rock of Ages.

THE MILITARY PROFESSION, UNLAWFUL FOR A CHRISTIAN.

The following extracts from Letters on the Unlawfulness of the military Profession for a Christian, are taken from the Memoir of Gordon Hall, A.M., one of the first missionaries of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, at Bombay, by Horatio Bardwell. Glasgow, 1834.

It will be perceived by the following extracts, as well as by a preceding letter, * that G. Hall was an advocate for the doctrine of peace. He uniformly and zealously opposed the principle of war in every shape, and on every occasion. He was not altogether unsuccessful in his efforts to lead others to adopt the same sentiment. It is known that two young English officers in the India service, with whom G. Hall was conversant, were brought into the same sentiments, chiefly through his instrumentality. It is believed both of these young gentlemen consider G. Hall as instrumental in their conversion to God, as well as in leading them to abandon the principle of war.

The following letters were written by G. Hall, to one of these young men:—

"Bombay, Aug. 15, 1813.

"My dear Friend,

"Your's of the 23rd came to hand last evening. I rejoice that the Lord has not forsaken you, that he does not leave you to sin, without being sensible of it, that he is teaching you the depravity of your heart, the vanity of this world, the necessity of Christ and the duty of taking up the cross and following him. How great is that grace, which inclined your heart to think of the Saviour!

"When we think of the treachery of our hearts, where should we find any hope, had not God said, I will not forsake my people? In our hearts all is discouragement—in Christ, all is encouragement. Without Christ, we can do nothing—through Christ strengthening us, we can do all things.

"You desire me to be very explicit on 'the matter of war, and respecting its being justifiable or not.' You cannot mean that I should enter into a full discussion of the whole subject; it would require a volume. I perfectly agree with you in viewing the three cases of war which you have mentioned, as entirely contrary to the Gospel. If these three are the only cases in which you are liable to be called to fight, and if you deem it contrary to fight in either of these cases, then your way is clear. You must leave the army, or do violence to your conscience.

"As to war and violence, in every shape, I am as confident that it is utterly contrary to the spirit of the Gospel, as I am that theft or any other immorality is so. You cannot expect me to collect and arrange the arguments against it. Just look at this command, 'Put ye on the Lord Jesus.' Assume his character—be holy and harmless as he was—be meek, lowly, gentle, and inoffensive as he was. Love your enemies, pray for them, and do them good, as he did. Peter, in his zeal to defend his master (and what cause could be more justifiable?) cut off an ear of one of the mob. But Peter was reproved for drawing the sword, and Christ wrought a miracle to heal his enemy, and when he was seized by his enemies, he was led like a lamb to the slaughter,—he opened not his mouth. Such is the character we are to put on, and never, for a moment, to put off. Now, can the man who thus puts on Christ, thus abides in Christ, thus conforms to Christ, can *he* draw his sword and take the life of his fellow-man, and hurry him to the bar of God?

"'Whatever ye would that men should do to you, do ye the same to them.'—Now is it possible for a man to commit any kind of violence, without breaking this command?

"We are commanded to *pray* for *all* men, and to pray without ceasing.—Who can reconcile this with the business of *killing* them?

"It is our duty to pray that *wars* may cease. But how would such a prayer sound on the lips of a man girded with the *sword*?—Let your heart be open to conviction—keep the Saviour before your eye, and you cannot remain in doubt on this subject."

"Bombay, Sept., 1813.

"Dear Friend,

"You say that your sins and your

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* See the last paragraph.

Saviour are constantly before your eyes. I rejoice at this. May it never be otherwise. David, that eminent servant of God, said, 'My sin is ever before me;' and again, 'I set the Lord always before me.' These were doubtless two important means, which he employed, in his becoming a man after God's own heart.

"You do well in making every step a subject of prayer. Could I say any thing to impress this duty still more deeply upon your mind, I should deem myself inexcusable in not doing it. Your trying circumstances do, in a very special manner, call you to prayerfulness.

"Concerning your resignation, I think you have taken a right course. It is unquestionably correct to reduce your inquiry to a single point, —'Is the profession of arms right, on *Bible* proof, or is it wrong?' If wrong, if sinful, it must be abandoned, come what may,—nothing is so daring and presumptuous as living in known sin. But, my friend, *feel* the importance of being taught by the *Holy Spirit*. If you see your duty, you will not pursue it, unless moved forward by the grace of God. If you begin the pursuit, you will finish it only through Christ strengthening you.

"The question before you is, whether you shall abandon what the world calls honourable, lucrative, and wise; and, in the place of it, take what the same world esteems folly, ignominy, and poverty. In this you will find the world, Satan, and all the wickedness of your own heart combined to oppose you. They will not mind defeats—if they do not succeed in one attack, they will plot another. In the great work of salvation, it is Satan's policy, first, to hold the sinner in perfect stupidity; if he fail in this, he will endeavour to induce him to put it off for the present; if he does not succeed here, he will attempt to substitute error for truth. These are his devices, not only in the article of personal salvation, but in every step of Christian duty. May you be enabled to take refuge in Christ, who has overcome principalities and powers, and can easily give you the victory over all these mighty foes."

"Bombay, Sept. 27, 1813.

"My dear Friend,

"Your's of the 18th came to hand on the 21st. We unitedly bless God for his mercy to you. Neither we nor you can ever ascribe to him one thousandth part of that praise, which is his due; but let us do all we can, and pray for strength to do more. If God has truly enlightened your mind by a knowledge of his truth, and enabled you, in any measure, to do his will, how great the mercy! Such knowledge does not spring from any acuteness of mental discernment; for the natural man understandeth not the things of the Spirit, nor can he know them, because they are *spiritually* discerned.—You say, you are ignorant—and well may you say this. The Christian is a perpetual student; he has many things to study and to learn, before he can fully know what the Lord would have him do. So far as you have obtained a knowledge of God's will, you cannot hold it fast, unless you are strengthened by divine grace; much less can you, without the same grace, derive peace and comfort from that knowledge. While you fear that you are leaning to your own understanding, see well to it, that you do not fear still more to submit yourself to be taught of God—to sit at the feet of Jesus, with an entire willingness to hear and obey every direction he may give.

"You seem decided on the subject of war. I think all your subsequent reflections, if devout, will only confirm your decisions, and render you more thankful for that spiritual light and grace, which enabled you to make them. You request me, 'to search, if there are any scriptural proofs in favour of war:' I could as soon look for proofs that men may lie one to another, as that they may slaughter one another. The last passages on which my mind received satisfaction were, Rom. xiii. 1—8; 1 Cor. vii. 20—21. The objection arising from the first of these, you have answered incontrovertibly; the second no more proves that the soldier must abide in his calling, than it does that the highwayman must abide in his.

"You say you cannot remain in the army, with a clear conscience, and shall therefore resign your commission,—but by retaining it and going to England on furlough, and then resigning, the passage will cost you only one thousand five hundred rupees, whereas if you resign *here* your passage will cost four thousand. If your profession in the army is incompatible with your duty as a Christian, it can be no less sinful for you to continue in that profession for a *moment*, either on board ship or in England, than here; and to do it, for the sake of saving money to benefit your aged parents, or for any other purpose, would be 'doing evil, that good may come.'

"In the present stage of the business, I advise you to bring distinctly before your mind this solemn enquiry,—by what course of life you can do *most* for the glory of God, and retain a *conscience* void of offence."

The following and last letter to this young officer, contains a discussion of a principle of very general application, and on which multitudes are deceived to their own ruin and the great injury of the community; it therefore deserves the particular consideration of the reader.

"Bombay, Oct. 5, 1813.

"MY DEAR SIR,

"The questions you propose are important, and not without difficulties. I consider myself as fearfully responsible to God for every word I write to you. I need much time to meditate upon and examine the subject. But as you desire me to write immediately, and as I shall only have time to receive another letter from you before my expected departure, I send you such thoughts as occur to my mind without much meditation.

"Your first enquiry is this,—'Can I relinquish the present means of subsistence, which God has given me, till I have some reasonable hope of gaining my bread?'——You admit that your profession is a sinful one, which you cannot conscientiously follow. But, dear sir, will you charge God with putting you into this sinful profession, or providing such unholy means for your subsistence? Ought you not rather to consider, that in the pride, vanity, and thoughtlessness of your heart, *you put yourself* into this situation, contrary to his will, as made known to you in his word; and that God might justly call you to want and disgrace for it? Again, if your profession is a sinful one, is it better to run the risk of continuing a while in a course of sin, than to run the risk of wanting bread?

"You say, 'till I have some *reasonable* hope of gaining my bread;' I would have you examine Psa. xxxiv. 9—10, and lxxxiv. 11; Matt. vi. 25—34, and Mark x. 28—31. Now, do not the numerous promises of this kind, which God has made to his children, amount to so much as 'a *reasonable* hope of gaining your bread?' Do not the terms of this enquiry look something like this? If I could but *see* that my bread would be sure, then I would *trust* in God for it, and do what he commands; but till I have this 'reasonable hope,' I must take care of *myself*.—My dear sir, we are to walk by *faith*, and *not* by sight.

"You argue from the command, 'Abstain from all *appearance* of evil,' as though giving up a reasonable hope of gaining your bread had the 'appearance' of evil. But has it not something more than the 'appearance of evil?'—is it not evil *itself*—to remain in an evil employment, though you might in your heart intend to make a pious use of the avails of that employment?

"But, after all, if the course you contemplate should bring you to hunger, and even to death, would that be any argument against it? What has the faith of those of whom the world was not worthy, brought them to? (See Heb. xi. 36—39.) Can you suffer more than they? and does their suffering prove that they chose a *wrong* course?

"Your next enquiry is, 'what shall you do for your dear parents in this trying situation?' This is a tender point. I shall only observe at present, that if your profession is a sinful one, *they* sinned in putting their son into it, and God might justly make them suffer for it. Certainly neither they nor any other persons have a right, for a moment, to bind you to that situation, which you cannot occupy, without violating the precepts and will of your Saviour, nor can any consideration justify you in sustaining a profession, which you *know* to be disallowed by Christ."

The following extract is from the letter alluded to in the first paragraph :—

"As to war, you may mark me for a thorough Quaker. I believe it is utterly opposed to the spirit of the gospel, for man, in any case, to draw his sword and stab his brother—'bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh.' I wish every body would read Barclay, Clarkson, and Dodge, on this subject. Though they have not advanced the whole weight of argument that might be presented, yet I think enough to convince every pious mind. How long did many good men advocate the slave-trade,—but what a phenomenon to see such a man now! So it will soon be with war."

THE FIRST QUESTION.

"The first question to be proposed by a rational being is, not what is profitable, but what is right. Duty must be primary, prominent, most conspicuous, among the objects of human thought and pursuit. If we cast it down from its supremacy, if we inquire first for our interests, and then for our duties, we shall certainly err. We can never see the right clearly and fully, but by making it our first concern. No judgment can be just or wise, but that which is built on the conviction of the paramount worth and importance of duty. This is the fundamental truth, the supreme law of reason; and the mind which does not start from this, in inquiries into human affairs, is doomed to great, perhaps fatal error.

"The right is the supreme good, and includes all other goods. In seeking and adhering to it, we secure our true and only happiness. All prosperity, not founded on it, is built on sand. If human affairs are controlled, as we believe, by Almighty rectitude and impartial goodness, then to hope for happiness from wrong-doing, is as insane as to seek health and prosperity by rebelling against the laws of nature,—by sowing our seed on the ocean, or making poison our common food. There is but one unfailing good: and that is, fidelity to the everlasting law written on the heart, and rewritten and republished in God's word."

W. E. C.

SCRIPTURAL TEACHING.—PUBLIC CHURCH MEETINGS.

The New Testament affords us information *in detail*, as to only one kind of religious meetings. Other meetings are incidentally mentioned indeed, but we have no minute description of them, or directions as to the particular mode of conducting them. Thus in Acts i. 14, and xii. 12, we have mention of *prayer meetings*, but without further particulars. Thus also, in Acts xx. 7, we read of the disciples being "come together to *break bread*." And in Cor. xi. 20 to 34, we have mention of certain disorders which had crept into these celebrations of "the Lord's Supper." But in no part of the New Testament have we any formal directions as to the method to be observed in these meetings. And, to the Corinthians, the Apostle, after reproving the existing disorders, merely says, "The rest will I set in order when I come." *Public discussions* are also mentioned. The Apostle Paul "*disputed* daily in the school of one Tyrannus. And this continued by the space of two years, so that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus." Acts xix. 9, 10. And lastly, though not least, we frequently read of *preaching* by the Apostles and Evangelists, &c.; but still there is no particular direction as to the *mode* to be pursued in any of these cases.

But there is one kind of meeting —a *public church meeting*, or meeting of the church, to which strangers and unbelievers were admitted, respecting which very definite directions are given us. We wish to call the especial attention of our friends to this mode of assembling together. The design of those assemblages is stated to be the edification of the church, and the conviction of unbelievers. And the circumstance, that they are minutely ordered, whilst other meetings are only enjoined in general terms, or incidently mentioned, should give them peculiar importance in our estimation. But that which requires us to call special attention to them, now, is the astounding fact, that they are altogether overlooked and neglected by nearly the whole of what is called the Christian world. The very meetings of Christians, which are more explicitly described and directed than any other, are the meetings which, more than all others, are disregarded and neglected by almost all the sections of the Christian Church! We purpose to point out the nature of these *Public Church Meetings*, and to show that there is a necessity and an obligation for their restoration.

The account given of them, and the directions respecting them, may be found in the fourteenth chapter of Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians. But in order to perspicuity, we will give the chief part of the chapter.

> If therefore the whole church be come together into one place, and all speak with tongues, and there come in those that are unlearned, or unbelievers, will they not say that ye are mad?
>
> But if all prophesy, and there come in one that believeth not, or one unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all:
>
> And thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest; and so, falling down on his face, he will worship God, and report that God is in you of a truth.
>
> How is it then, brethren? when ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying.
>
> If any man speak in an unknown tongue, let it be by two (sentences at a time), or at the most by three, and that by course; and let one interpret.
>
> But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church; and let him speak to himself, and to God.
>
> Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge.
>
> If any thing be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the first hold his peace.
>
> For ye may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted.
>
> And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets.
>
> For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.
>
> Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law.
>
> And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church.
>
> What! came the word of God out from you? or came it unto you only?
>
> If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord.
>
> But if any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant.
>
> Wherefore, brethren, covet to prophesy, and forbid not to speak with tongues.
>
> Let all things be done decently, and in order.

Now we have here, 1st. Information as to the parties assembling; 2nd. Directions as to the mode of proceeding when assembled; 3rd. Cautions against disorderly proceedings; and 4th. Information as to the ends to be accomplished.

1. The parties assembling are, first, *the whole of the members of the church.* "If therefore the whole church be come together into one place," and secondly, *the public,*—"And there come in those that are unlearned or unbelievers."

2. As to the proceedings, we learn, first, that *all brethren should be allowed to take part in them.* "How is it then, brethren?" how are your meetings conducted? "*Every one of you* hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation." "Ye may all prophesy one by one." "Desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy." "Wherefore, brethren, covet to prophesy." We learn, secondly, that it should be left to the brethren to take such a part as they shall be convinced is in accordance with the mind of the spirit. "Every one of you hath a psalm, or a doctrine, or a tongue, or a revelation, or an interpretation." One hath a *psalm*, or hymn, which he gives out or sings. Another hath a *doctrine*, or a piece of instruction, to communicate. Another hath a foreign *tongue*, so that every one in his own tongue, wherein he was born, may hear the wonderful works of God. Another hath a *revelation*, or explanation of some point of truth or duty. Another hath an *interpretation* of any foreign tongue which may be used in the meeting. Now each of the brethren is to determine which part he should take; but still this determination is not to be made in all cases without regard to the judgment of his brethren. We learn, thirdly, that *prophecy* is intended by God to be the leading feature of these meetings. "I would that ye all spake with tongues, but *rather that ye all prophesied*, for greater is he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues." "Ye may all prophecy one by one." By *prophe-*

cy here is meant, evidently not the predicting of future events, but *teaching.* "He that prophesieth, speaketh unto men to *edification*, and *exhortation*, and *comfort.*" "If all prophesy, and there come in one that is unlearned, or believeth not, he is *convinced* of all, he is *judged* of all,"—these are the ends of the gift which is here termed prophesying.

3. We have some cautions against disorderly proceedings. In the first place, we have these general ones. "Let all things be done unto edifying." "For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all the churches." "Let all things be done decently and in order." Meetings of this character *may* therefore be conducted so as to edify, and so as to avoid confusion and impropriety. God himself ordains and is "the author" of these meetings, but he is not he author of confusion, but of peace, in all the churches of the saints,—in all which churches these ordinances are to be observed. But secondly, we have a more explicit direction for the maintenance of order. "Let the prophets speak two or three, and *let the rest judge.*" "For *the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets:*" that is, the speakers or prophets give place to each other. 3rdly. Women are not to take a public part in these meetings. "Let your women keep silence in the churches; for it is not permitted unto them to speak." 4thly. No one is to speak in a foreign tongue, unless there be present an interpreter.

4. The ends to be accomplished by ssemblies thus regulated are, as we have already stated, the edification of the church, and the conviction and conversion of unbelievers. "Let all things be done unto edifying." "That all may learn, and all be comforted." "If all prophesy, and there come in one that believeth not, or one unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all."

Now, how mournful is the prevailing neglect of these divinely instituted assemblies. We cannot doubt but that the great Head of the Church knew best what modes of giving instruction to his people, and to unbelievers, to institute. We cannot doubt but that the means he has instituted are well adapted to their end,—that his plans are not only good, but *the best.* And yet this plan of His has been allowed to fall into almost universal neglect! It cannot go well with the church, when it is so far negligent of the Scriptures, or so far "wise above that which is written," as to set aside one part of those plain appointments of its head.

Our wish is to induce our friends to revive these ancient and scriptural assemblages. We do not desire them to set aside means of instruction and edification at present in use among the churches. We do not wish them to do away with prayer meetings, or preachings, or communion meetings, or "love feasts." We believe all these are sanctioned by the Scriptures. But we do propose to *make room* for the kind of meetings which the apostle so fully describes. We think they should again take a prominent place among the meetings of God's people. We believe that every church should have such meetings at least once a week, and that on the Sabbath. The propriety and necessity of such a step may be shown by a great variety of considerations.

1. We would mention in the first place, the manifest sanction of the Sacred Scriptures.

2. A body is perfect only whilst every member is healthy and active. Thus it is with the church. The parts assigned to each member of the church are all necessary to its full prosperity. Free ministration, therefore, is essential to the welfare of the church, and consequently to the conversion of the world. To neglect this institution is plainly to reject one of the principal means by which God designs to communicate light and grace to mankind.

3. To prevent this free ministration is to take away from God's people one of their rights and privileges,—to deprive them of their Christian liberty. Christians are exhorted to seek the gift of teaching, and liberty to exercise that gift is secured to them all by the great Gospel charter. All opposition to this liberty is spiritual tyranny.

4. To oppose this kind of ministration is to resist the Holy Ghost. "All these worketh that one and the self-same spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will." Those, there-

fore, who resist this order, resist not man, but God.

5. Such resistance also fosters strife and schism. The only way to arrive at unity in the church, is to submit to all the ordinances of the Scripture. The commandments of men may be resisted without bringing on those who resist them the guilt of any schism. But to resist an acknowledged ordinance of God is downright rebellion.

6. The neglect of free ministration in the church tends to over-burthen one part of Christ's followers, and to beget indolence in the other. When the pastor of a church is made its sole teacher, his mental powers are taxed beyond their strength. Or, if all the public teaching is made to devolve on a few, *they* cannot furnish such a supply of wholesome spiritual food as the various wants of men require. Hence the dry, and stale, and oft-repeated disquisitions beneath which many congregations slumber. Hence, also, the prevailing mode of manufacturing sermons; the use of ugly, worn-out skeletons, which a thousand preachers have held forth in a thousand different places. God does not intend to enable any man, or any one order of men, fully to feed his church. Instead, however, of having often two or three brief addresses, full of light and heat, spoken by the brethren as the spirit gives them utterance, the church has now constantly to listen to one long, fixed, methodical piece of composition, which often bears the marks of exhausted mental powers. The prevailing mode also makes thousands indolent. Unless a layman can make set sermons, and go about from place to place to preach them, he must, in most religious bodies, as things are now ordered, remain altogether silent, so far as public teaching is concerned. Consequently those who cannot do all this, must be content not to teach publicly at all. And thus "thoughts that breathe, and words that burn," are smothered and lost to the church; and many thousands of its members are but spiritual drones. Multitudes, also, that would be induced to think and read, and so to exercise their mental powers, and acquire considerable stores of knowledge, by such meetings as the apostle describes, sit under the common sort of preaching their whole life through, without being led to think at all to good purpose. The public church meetings described by St. Paul, would obviate all these evils.

7 In many places a regular supply of preaching, especially from such as are fully given up to the work of the ministry, cannot be had, and unless the Christian friends in such places, adopt the plan of the Primitive churches, and seek, by the blessing of God, thus to edify each other, as well as to convert their ungodly neighbours, they must be unedified, and the cause of God among them must decline. There is no prospect whatever for a general Evangelical reform, until this order of meetings be fairly and faithfully tried.

8. The present plan is productive of another very fatal evil. It leads the members of the church to trust to the efforts of one man, or a few men; and to expect the church to prosper or languish in proportion to the talents and piety of their preachers. Now, the truth is, that the members are responsible for the prosperity of the church, as well as the pastor or pastors. The church is a commonwealth, and each member is to do his part in promoting its interests.

Lastly. The revival of the ancient plan will, we believe, form a catholic ground for a union of all the different sects. The partial adoption of this plan by one or two sections of the church has not given it a fair trial. The Society of Friends, much as they have done, have not fairly tried it. Their assemblages have not assumed a catholic character. We are glad, however, to notice the institution of meetings of this kind among a number of "Christian Brethren," whose proceedings are now attracting considerable attention. We believe the time is near, when a general improvement, with respect to church discipline, as well as Christian practice generally, must take place; and we hope the improvement will be thorough, and a truly catholic one. We know of nothing so much calculated to secure this, as the restoration of church meetings on the primitive and scriptural plan laid down by the Apostle Paul. There should be both *private* and *public* meetings on this plan. The public ones we have already described. The private ones we purpose to describe in another article,—they will specially tend to blend all sects of Christians into one,—they are the "feasts of charity" mentioned by Jude; they were suppressed during the fourth century, and they have never yet been wholly restored. So soon as men are really willing to become Christians altogether, and to take the New Testament really, for their only standard, both of doctrine and of duty, their eyes shall be opened, and light and love shall make them one. They shall be "of one heart and of one soul:" and become "one fold under one shepherd." We hope the day draws near, when this happy state of things shall be brought about.

Meanwhile, what is our duty? We think that, as to the meetings which are the subject of this article, our duty is plain and easy. We must restore them with as little delay as possible. We are happy to find, that in various places steps are already being taken to do this, and we hope that our friends generally will give the matter their serious consideration. We would suggest the propriety of meetings of churches for the purpose of giving information on this subject. We think this might be done without causing uneasiness or dissension.—The plan in many places has met with almost unanimous approval, and we are inclined to think it will do so in most others, if properly proposed. Let the matter be thoroughly understood, and it must commend itself to every man's conscience in the sight of God.

This then, in conclusion, is, in few words, what we recommend.—That at least once every Sabbath, if not also during the week, each church should assemble in one place, alowing the public to be present. That, any one that is known to be a brother, and that has not been "judged" unfit by "the rest," should be allowed to give out a psalm or hymn, to offer instruction, to interpret the scriptures, or in any other divinely-sanctioned way, to instruct or edify the assembly. And still that each should be so "subject" to the rest, and all to each other, that "all things may be done decently and in order." And as this is one of God's own plans, we say, let all thankfully embrace it. We need not fear the consequence. Let us learn to follow, without hesitation, the leadings of the spirit of truth, and leave results with God. "God is not the author of confusion." Let us submit ourselves to him, he cannot lead us wrong.

Our strength Thy grace, our rule Thy word,
Our end the glory of the Lord.

By Thy unerring Spirit led,
We shall not in the desert stray:
We shall not full direction need,
Nor miss our providential way:
As far from danger as from fear,
While love, Almighty love, is near.

VESSELS OF GOLD AND SILVER.

"They are rare to get, hard to keep, and it may be not so accommodate to use. Will not a knife cut quite as well though it have not an ivory haft, or be not garnished with silver? or an earthen bason serve to wash the hands? will not the table hold our provisions, unless its feet be made of ivory? or the lamp give its light though made by a potter, as well as if it were the work of the goldsmith? may not a man sleep as well upon a mean couch, as upon a bed of ivory? upon a goat's skin, as well as upon a purple or Phenician carpet? Our Lord ate his meat out of a common dish, and made his followers sit upon the grass, and washed his disciples' feet, without ever fetching down a silver bowl from heaven. He took the water which the Samaritaness had drawn in an earthen pitcher, not requiring one of gold, showing how easy it was to quench his thirst; for he respected the use, not the vain and superfluous state, of things."—*Clement of Alexandria, (A D. 200.)*

"A community can suffer no greater calamity than the loss of its principles. Lofty and pure sentiment is the life and hope of a people."

W. E. C.

CONVERSATION WITH A SOLDIER.

My Dear Friend,

I was travelling lately from Manchester to Birmingham on the railway. The person who sat next me in the carriage was a marine in the Queen's service. We soon fell into conversation; and the conversation was so interesting to myself, and seemed to me to be so well calculated to teach two or three most impressive and important lessons, that I thought it might not be amiss to lay it before the readers of the *Investigator*. The substance of what passed was as follows; and as near as I can recollect I give the exact words.

T. It is very cold this morning.

M. Yes, and I have not been in a cold climate now for several years.

T. You are a traveller then? In what parts have you travelled?

M. I was at China last?

T. At China, indeed! Then have you been there since hostilities commenced between the British and Chinese?

M. Yes, I was in some of the first engagements.

T. You are not a soldier, are you?

M. No, I am a marine; neither a soldier nor a sailor, but a little bit of both.

T. Well, but you are not dressed in uniform.

M. No, I have put these clothes on to travel in, because they are warmer.

T. And you have been engaged in active service?

M. Yes, I have been in two or three frays. But the Chinese are such d——d cowards, they won't stay to fight, they always run away.

T. And are you never afraid when you enter a battle?

M. Yes, for about ten minutes; but after that one forgets every thing.

T. Then you are afraid at the commencement? I dare say you think at those times of the oaths you have uttered.

M. Yes, one thinks about standing before one's maker then, and all the sins one has committed rise up in one's mind; but thoughts of that sort are soon gone when the battle has fairly begun.

T. But would it not be better to think of these things before, and prepare for danger and for death?

M. Yes, it would; a good man is the best off, after all; and he has the most courage too.

T. Then you have some good men amongst you?

M. Oh yes, we have some religious men among us: and a religious man makes the best soldier; he is not so much afraid as others.

T. Then, if you think religion so good, why do you not embrace it?

M. Why, one thinks one will sometimes, but one forgets you see. But I like to go to church on a Sunday, as well as any body.

T. Yes, but unless you practise through the week what you learn at church on Sunday, going to church will do you but little good.

To this my friend assented, and a pause ensued; after some time the conversation was resumed as follows.

T. And do you think it is right to kill men in war?

M. I did not use to think so; it is murder you know, right enough; but one gets accustomed to it.

T. And do you ever get so accustomed to it that you care nothing about it?

M. Oh yes, a man forgets every thing in battle, and he'll take a dead fellow by the arm, toss him over, and sit down on his belly for a seat!

T. And have you done so?

M. Yes I have; but I could not have believed once that I could ever have done so. One thinks about nature before one's a soldier, but when a man gets up to his elbows in blood, he loses all that. The sight of blood makes a man like a tiger!

T. Well, you shock me. You cannot think, in your cool moments, that it is thus right to murder men?

M. No, but we are hired to do it.

T. And could I hire you to go on to the highway and kill a man for me there?

M. No, that is different. They are not one's own countrymen, they are the enemies of one's country that we kill.

T. Not they, indeed, they know nothing about what they are fighting for; and then they all come from one common stock with ourselves, and have one common nature, and are travelling to one common eternity.

M. Yes, they all descend from Adam, that's true enough.

Here the train stopped and the conversation was broken off, and it was not afterwards renewed on the same subject.

I did afterwards give such advice to the person I talked with as appeared appropriate; and he seemed to hear all with attention, and to be thankful for what was said to him. I hope that some impression was made on his mind, and that, through the blessing of Heaven, he may remember what was said at another day.

The conversation produced a deep and terrible impression on my own mind; I thought about it when alone, and I talked about it with a friend; and amongst many others, it suggested to me the following reflections.

1. How terrible is sin! This man acknowledged that, on entering battle, he remembered with concern the oaths that he had uttered, and that all his sins rose up before him. A guilty conscience is a dreadful companion.

2. How amiable is religion? Even under all the disadvantages of a soldier's life, it seems that some had been enabled, by divine grace, to conduct themselves with so much propriety as to extort from the man the confession, that "A good man is the best off after all." Nothing so effectually prepares the mind for facing danger and death, as the religion of the Gospel.

3. How graciously forbearing is the Almighty! A soldier's life, and especially a soldier's employment in active service, necessarily involves the commission of the most dreadful sins. And yet it appears that there are some, even under circumstances like these, who faithfully improve the measure of light and grace that God imparts to them; and who, fearing God and working righteousness, according to the best convictions of their minds, are accepted of God, notwithstanding their perpetration of those horrid deeds to which the profession of war impels them. Of course, they could not be thus accepted if their eyes were opened to the wickedness of their deeds, and if they still continued to practise them.

4. How powerful is habit! Here was a man, to all appearance naturally kind and amiable, so habituated to scenes of bloodshed and horror, that he could talk about murdering his fellow-men with the most perfect indifference. Little did he think at one time that his mind could ever be so dreadfully perverted. Beware of the beginnings of evil. When a man takes the first step in the downward road, he little imagines whither that road will conduct him.

5. How degrading and brutalizing is war! "THE SIGHT OF BLOOD MAKES A MAN LIKE A TIGER!" These words are still tingling in my ears. O this is the direst evil of all the long black train of evils that are inseparable from war. It extinguishes natural affection. It crushes every tender sympathy of the human breast. It familiarizes men to scenes of blood till they seem more like ravenous beasts than human beings. Where is the Christian that would not unite with his fellow-Christians in earnest prayers and ceaseless efforts, for the entire and everlasting overthrow of this black infernal system? Who would not, with all his heart, say Amen to the Psalmist's prayer, "Scatter the nations that delight in war?"

6. How true that the love of money is the root of all evil! This man acknowledged that he committed murder; "but then we are hired to do it," said he! And what crime is there that men may not be *hired* to commit, when once the love of money has taken possession of their souls? From this man's testimony it is plain, that soldiers frequently know that to kill men in war is murder, and that the reason why they do it is that they are hired to do it! And yet we call those *Christian* countries by which such barbarities are practised! We call those *Christian* governments who thus *hire* men to murder their fellow-men!*

7. What excuses men can find for sin! This man knew it was murder to kill men in war; but he did not think it was so bad to murder a Foreigner as an Englishman. Alas! when once men give themselves up to the practice of sin, the slightest pretexts serve to excuse the most horrid crimes. The slave-holder does not think it wrong to kidnap and hold

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* *We*, as individuals, do not so call them.

in bondage a *black* man; and the soldier does not think it so bad to commit murder, if it is only a Foreigner that he murders!

8. How lovely is the religion of the Saviour—how honourable to God—how friendly to man! The Gospel knows no distinction between natives and foreigners. In Christ Jesus there is neither Jew nor Greek, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free; all are regarded alike by him as children of one family. The Gospel alone strikes at the root of those selfish passions and natural animosities in which war originates, and which alone supply the fuel by which the flame of war is fed. The Gospel teaches all men to regard each other as brethren, and to consider an injury inflicted on the humblest, weakest, most defenceless of mankind, as an offence to God, and as an injury done to the whole race. It is by the Gospel alone that a public opinion can be formed which shall frown on warlike habits, and discourage a warlike spirit; it is only in proportion as the Gospel extends its triumphs, that the devastations of war can be curtailed; and it is not until the Gospel has gained a universal spread, that the ravages of war shall entirely cease. The Lord hasten the day when nation shall no longer rise up against nation, but when they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks, and when the nations shall learn war no more.

I remain, Dear Friend,
Yours very affectionately,
W. TROTTER.

AN EXCELLENT EXAMPLE.

Some years before the French revolution, a lady, who was a bookseller at Paris, went to the church at Notre-Dame, to hear an eloquent preacher. His discourse was particularly levelled against irreligious books; and the lady had cause enough to reproach herself on that scale, having been in the habit of selling many publications which were contrary to good morals and religion. Interest had blinded her, as it does many others in the same line of business: but being penetrated by the sermon, she saw very clearly that impious and licentious books were a dreadful poison to the heart; and she was compelled to acknowledge that those who print, or sell, or contribute to circulate them in any way whatever, are so many public poisoners, whom God will one day call to account for the evils they occasion. Impressed with these sentiments, she went to the preacher, and with tears in her eyes, she said to him, "You have rendered me a great service, by giving me to see how culpable I have been in selling many impious books; and I entreat you to finish the good work you have begun, by taking the trouble to come to my warehouse to examine all the books that are in it, and to put aside all those which may be injurious to morals or religion. Whatever it cost me, I am determined to make the sacrifice: I had rather be deprived of a part of my property, than consent to lose my soul." The preacher acted according to her request, and when he had separated the good from the bad, she took the latter, and, in his presence, cast them one after another into a great fire she had provided for the purpose. The price of the works thus consumed, amounted to about six thousand livres, which in English money would be more than two hundred and fifty pounds. She made the sacrifice without regret; and, from that time, endeavoured to sell no books but what might tend to counteract the evil done by the others. How much it is to be regretted, that there are booksellers still to be found, who continue to sell playing cards, and vicious publications, and yet they profess to be the followers of Christ!

A GOOD NAME.

A good name among men, which is the reputation of our integrity, is not to be neglected as a thing of nought; for it is a mercy from God for which we must be thankful, and it is a useful means to our successful serving and honouring God. And the more eminent we are, and the more the honour of God and religion is joined with ours, and the more the good of men's souls dependeth on our reputation, the more careful should we be of it. Especially preachers, whose success for the saving of their hearers depends much on their good name, must not despise it.—*Baxter.*

WHAT IS IT THAT IS NOW WANTED ON THE PART OF THE CHURCH, IN ORDER TO THE CONVERSION OF THE WORLD?

There prevails, in many religious circles, a notion very much like the following, viz. "Special prayer is now the only course which Christians can adopt, in order to secure the world's conversion,—all other means have been tried already, and have failed." As this notion may influence the whole character of those who fully embrace it, we now purpose to examine whether it has any substantial foundation. We submit the following examination to all those who have expressed the opinion, or an opinion similar to it.

The point to be decided is, not whether the world shall ever be converted,—this is taken for granted. Neither is it a question as to what are the means by which its conversion shall be accomplished; but whether all other means but special, persevering prayer, have been "tried," —whether such prayer is the only additional agency that can now be employed. Is it true, then, that all other agencies but prayer have been tried? The "other means" referred to in our question, we presume, are such as the following: 1. The preaching of the Gospel. 2. The employment of the press. 3. The example of the Christian church as "a city set upon a hill," and "a light of the world." 4. The efforts of Christians, to lead their fellow-men to God, by private conversations, &c., &c. And, 5. The devotion of worldly property.

Have these means been *tried?* that is, have they been *so* employed as to justify the conclusions that man has done, or is doing, his part in reference to *them*, and that all that now is wanting is the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and that this is withheld only because not sufficiently sought by prayer? If they have been *thus* tried, we must, I apprehend, come to the conclusion, that special and united prayer for the conversion of the world, is the grand, the *only* additional step that the church can now take. But, if it should appear that all other means *have not been thus tried*, then we must dissent from the opinion; and then we may properly institute another inquiry—namely, whether our neglect of those means which man is called upon to employ, is not the reason why the necessary outpouring of the Holy Spirit is withheld. Or, in other words, whether man's indifference to the duties which *he* is called upon to perform, be not the cause of the suspension of the promised blessing on the part of God. Let us examine, then, whether those important agencies, which we have specified, have been properly tried.

1st. And in the first place, has the *preaching of the Gospel* been fairly and fully tried? Has it been *fully* tried? The direction given by Christ concerning this was as follows:—"Go ye out into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Has this command been obeyed? Has it been obeyed as far as possible? Has the Gospel been *offered* to all the nations that would listen? Have they all been *tried?* Have all those that would come been invited to come to the Saviour? Have all that were willing to be taught, been taught the truths of God? Has the church sent out as many teachers as it might? And have teachers tried what could be done, by labouring and keeping themselves free from charge, when no means of support from other quarters was proffered? Has the ancient method of uniting manual labour with evangelical labour been tried in modern times? If the Gospel has not been preached to every nation; or, if all that might be done in this respect has not been done,—if the Church has not sent out so many teachers as it might have sent out; and, if teachers have not *gone out* at their own cost, the preaching of the Gospel has not hitherto had a full and sufficient trial.

But we must also ask, if, where preaching the Gospel *has* been tried, it has been *fairly* tried: tried in all its extent? Have those congregations that have been taught some truths, been taught *all* the truth? The direction given to preachers of the Gospel is, "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." Have "all things whatsoever" our Lord commanded been taught by those who have gone out into his church as teachers? Have both *experience* and *practice* been generally enforced, as dependent on each other, and equally important? Has the whole truth, as to *both* these branches of Gospel requisition been exhibited generally and perseveringly? Have all those who have taught people the way to enter the kingdom of heaven, been careful to show them how to go on increasing in grace,—how to fulfil the perfect and acceptable will of God? Do men not only hear of the first principles of the Gospel, but of the higher and more arduous duties also? And if they hear those duties enforced, do they also hear them scripturally *explained?* For instance, when Christians are taught that they should "live henceforth, not unto themselves, but unto him that loved them and gave himself for them," are they also showed what is *meant* by living not unto themselves, but unto God? When they are taught to "love their neighbour as themselves," are they taught *what it is* thus to love their neighbours? Is their treatment of themselves compared with their conduct towards their neighbour; and if inconsistent with equal love to each, is the inconsistency and absolute sinfulness of such conduct pointed out? If this, the whole of this, be not done, however extensively the Gospel may be preached as to place, it is not preached *fairly:* its influence is not tried in such a way as to warrant the conclusion we are now examining. But,

2nd. What kind of trial has the next agency that we specified had? Has *the press* been fully and fairly tried? Has it had a complete trial as to the *distribution* of its productions? Where preaching has failed, have we tried what the circulation of books and tracts would do? Where people would not hear, has it been tried whether they would read? Has the church generally availed itself of this agency? Have even *most* of the sections of which it is composed availed themselves of this power? Have *any* of them? Is there one single sect that has fully tried what the press could do? Is there one single sect that, whenever its members could procure and circulate a thousand tracts, has taken care not to be satisfied with the distribution of only a hundred. Is there any one congregation that has done all that it might have done in this respect? Nay, how many individuals, among the thousands and tens of thousands of professing Christians of our country, have done all *they* could, from time to time, to diffuse light and truth by means of the productions of the press? And, even where efforts have been made to secure an *extensive* distribution of printed information, has there been an equally zealous attention paid to the *kind*, or quality of that information? Has the knowledge diffused been *the truth?* Has it been scriptural; and in accordance with the oracles of God? Has it been *the whole truth?* Have "all things whatsoever" Christ commanded been treated upon by the religious writers of the day, and duly published for the instruction of mankind? And has that which has been published and circulated been *nothing but the truth?* Has the press of Christendom ceased to produce erroneous and poisonous matter? Has it ceased to exhibit the traditions of men, and the relics of pagan superstition, as objects of authority or veneration? Or does not the greater portion of that press still send forth that which is worse than mere ignorance, if any thing can be worse? But, *even in our own enlightened country*, is the whole truth generally enforced in the religious treatises of the day? A person of the most extensive information and observation, who wrote about fifty years ago, in referring to a doctrine of Holy Scripture, made the following declaration:—"Who has the courage to declare so unfashionable a truth? I do not remember that, in threescore years, I have heard one sermon preached upon this subject. And what author, within the same term, has declared it from the press? at least, in the English tongue? I do not know one. I have neither seen nor heard of any such author?" And yet the subject here alluded to was, in the esteem of the person we now quote, of such vast importance, that he attributes the inefficiency of Christianity generally to the neglect of it. The author is John Wesley, and the subject to which he alludes, is the right use of money. Is the case altered in our own age? Is the church generally instructed as to the meaning of the numerous commands which bear upon this subject? Are publications treating upon this portion of a Christian's duty as widely spread as others, on other subjects connected with religion? The Bible, also, legislates as to the conduct of a Christian towards his enemies. Has that portion of the press that is in the employ of the Church of Christ, taught *this* branch of religious truth? And the same question may be asked in reference to many other matters connected with a Christian's faith and practice.

And, again, supposing the press to be employed as honestly as possible, and as widely as consists with present modes and terms of publication; we should also ask whether, by the adoption of an improved mode, and a reduced charge for publications, a still more extensive and efficient use might not be made of the press? This, also, is comprised in a full and fair trial of its powers. Now, unless *the press* be *thus* employed, we must acknowledge that here also the church has something more to do than it has done, before it has fully tried its strength.

3. Has *the Church been exhibited to the world in its proper character?* Has it been, and is it now, the light of a benighted world? Is it a spectacle to the nations of unity, and holiness, and charity? Is it an example of *unity*,—unity of heart and hand—unity both spiritual, and visible. The design of its founder was to convince the world of the divinity and truth of his mission, by the unity of his followers; which unity, was consequently designed to be manifest even to careless or prejudiced observers. "That they all may be one, even as we are one:—that the world may know that thou hast sent me." Has *this* means of convincing the world been tried? Has the world seen that the Christian Church is one? But some have maintained, that an external unity is not essential, that is, not enjoined. Suppose, then, (though merely for the sake of argument) that this notion is the true one, has the unity which even these parties contend for been tried? Has the church evinced to the world its unity even in affection? Have the Christians generally been one in heart? Surely, if not even this unity has been tried, we are greatly and fatally deficient. But how is unity of affection to be discerned? Is not the test, "by their fruits ye shall know them?" But if the affections of Christians have hitherto been so divided, as not even to lead them to tolerate in their communion many of their Christian brethren, do they exhibit such fruits as the world must and does expect? And yet, until all this be done, Christian unity, as a means of converting the world, has not been tried, either fairly or fully; and in such case we must again give the negative to the position we examine.

Again, has *holiness*, as a leading feature of the church's character, been tried? Has the church been exhibited to the world, not only as a united, but as a holy church? For, were the church ever so closely united, its union, if not a holy one, would be useless, or worse than useless. Has holiness then been prominently exhibited by the church generally? Have its dealings with the world been just and righteous? Has it always, or does it now, generally, use only a righteous influence in supporting or maintaining its claims? Has it not used, and does it not now use, other means than those which justice and charity dictate? Have its various *parts* been holy? Have the members of the church lived in "all manner of holy conversation and godliness?" Have they evinced holy tempers? holy dispositions? and a strictly holy course of action? Have they exhibited to the world an example of such *humility* as becomes fallen creatures? of entire submission to God's holy and righteous will? For, except the world has had *such* a spectacle presented to it, there is at least one means of producing conviction which has not been "tried."

Have *charity and benevolence*, as features of the church's character, been *tried?* The directions of Christ as to this particular are as follows: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." "While by the experiment of this ministration, they shall glorify God, for your professed subjection to the Gospel of Christ, and for your liberal distribution to them and to all men." Have Christians fairly and fully tried what *this subjection to the Gospel* would do? what influence it would exercise upon the world? Has the world had any example of very unusual and heavenly charity presented to it? at least in modern ages, and by the church generally? Has the church really presented a heavenly aspect to beholders? Lastly, has *self-denial*, for the purpose of *more extensive* benevolence, been a feature of the character of professing Christians?

Unless in each of these respects the church has been a spectacle,—"a city set upon a hill," to the surrounding world: unless the *unity*, and *holiness*, and *benevolence* of Christians have been as a light, giving light to all around; we must once more give the negative to the proposition we are considering; and conclude that the example of the church, as a means of converting the world, has by no means been "tried."

4thly. Have Christians generally tried what could be done *by private conversations*, remonstrances, and exhortations? Have they given a religious turn to social conversation as frequently as possible? Have they shown the cheerful, peaceful tendency of Christianity both in the matter and manner of their communications with their fellow-men? Has the world seen them "rejoicing evermore," and "in every thing giving thanks?" Has their demeanour shown that true religion is an all-sufficient remedy for gloom, and melancholy, and moroseness? Have Christians generally used tender and earnest exhortation, as a means of leading souls from sin to Christ? Have they, knowing the terrors of the Lord, endeavoured, whilst engaged in their various earthly avocations, to "persuade men?" Have they used every argument, and urged every motive, and that as constantly as possible, in order to overcome prejudice, and dispel ignorance? Have Christians used *remonstrances* as a means of promoting obedience to God? Has the command, "Thou shalt not suffer sin upon thy neighbour, but shalt in any wise rebuke him," been remembered and reduced to practice? When sinners have boldly and openly set at naught the commands of God; have they been faithfully warned?—To what extent have *these* efforts been tried? How many Christians have done what they might in this respect? Have ten thousand in a hundred thousand even purposed to adopt such a course; even to *try* such a means of converting the world? Yet this is one of the chief agencies in the accomplishment of the work, and until it be fairly and fully tried, men have not done their part.

Lastly. Has *the devotion of worldly property* been tried? Though mentioned last, this means is not the least. For, though "the gift of God" cannot be "purchased with money," yet money may be employed as a most efficient instrument in making known that salvation, which God offers "freely," "without money and without price." And if money be covetously withheld, God will withhold his blessing. If money be improperly withheld, none of the means we have already considered, can be fairly and fully tried. How can the preaching of the Gospel be thus tried, unless pecuniary means be furnished as abundantly as the resources of each member of the church will allow? How can the agency of the press be tried, fairly and fully, unless Christians will devote as much of their property as they possibly can to the purchase and circulation of instructive and sanctifying publications? How can the Christian church become an example to the world, if its pecuniary resources be either wasted in luxury, or laid up in the coffers of worldly wisdom, or heathenish mistrust? How can Christians employ their talents for conversation and persuasion fully and perseveringly, if their minds, and tongues, and hands, are constantly engaged in furthering their worldly interests? The devotion of worldly property then, the righteous acquisition and righteous appropriation of this talent, is a duty of the utmost importance. It affects, as we have now shown, all the other agencies for promoting Christianity.

Has this agency been tried? Have Christians generally done all they could in this respect? Have they sought to expend as little as possible on themselves, and as much as possible in works of piety and charity? Have they acquired money solely for these ends? Have they denied themselves for these ends? Have they considered how far the Holy Scriptures direct that they should go in giving, for the cause of God and of their fellow-men? Have they given all they could to promote the preaching of the Gospel in their own, and in distant lands? Have they given all they could to circulate printed information? Have they shown to the world that they regard and use all they have as God's? Have they spent no needless time in worldly business? Have they secured as much leisure as possible that their fellow-men might have the benefit of their talents? Have they been "content with food and raiment," and have they given so as to retain "nothing over?" For such is the *subjection* required by *the Gospel* of Christ.

We are now able to estimate, with some clearness, the character of the proposition which is the subject of this paper. We have glanced at some of the principal agencies which, in connection with constant and fervent prayer, are calculated to convert the world. If all these have been fully and fairly tried, *then* we must conclude that man's work is done or doing; or that all that he can now do in addition to this, is to induce the Almighty to do His part. But if all these means have not been fairly and fully tried, *then* we must not only increase in prayer, but if we would not prevent God from sending down the promised blessing, we must increase in labours also.

Have those means then been faithfully employed? Has the Gospel been preached as extensively and fully as possible? Has the press been put into the most extensive and efficient operation? Has the example of the church been fully and fairly tried? Has the instrumentality of private effort been thus tried? Has the devotion of property been thus tried? We are constrained to answer NO. Not one of those means has been fully tried. Not one of them has been half tried. What professing Christians have done in these various respects, is as nothing compared with what they might have done. The Church has come short in every thing, and its failings have been very great. In preaching the Gospel, in working the press, in exemplifying the spirit and precepts of the Gospel, in private efforts, and in the use of property, the church has been little better than a multitude of sleepy blunderers.

What then shall we do? Shall we go on as usual? God forbid! We must have much more prayer, it is true, but we must also *alter the whole tenor of our lives*, or our prayers will not ascend acceptably to God. "Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the Lord of Hosts. But ye said, Wherein shall we return? Will a man rob God? yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation. Bring ye all the tithes into my storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of Hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it."

THE RICHEST MAN ON EARTH.

NONE is so rich as the man who can stay his soul on that sure word of promise, "Trust in the Lord, and do good, so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed." This is a security in comparison with which all the bonds, and bills, and banks, and benefit or assurance societies on earth, are as nothing. In comparison with this security, all else is vanity and vexation of spirit. The man who seeks to secure himself against the future by any earthly refuge, will probably lose his all, and lose his soul besides. But the man whose spirit lays hold on this promise, not only saves his soul, but gains the whole world besides. All is his, for he is Christ's. The gold and the silver, and the cattle upon the thousand hills are his Father's, and he is heir of all. He is the richest man on earth.

CONGREGATIONALISM;

A CONVERSATION.

W. You have said a great deal about Congregationalism, and you recommend people to lay aside the authority of Conferences, to form themselves into churches on the Congregational Principle, and to acknowledge no authority but the authority of Christ Jesus: will you tell me how it is, if Congregationalism is superior to Connexionalism, that Connexionalism should have been so much more useful than Congregationalism, in promoting the spread of true religion, and the conversion of souls to God? How is it that the Wesleyan body, which is governed by a Conference, should have been so much more successful in saving souls, than Congregationalists, who acknowledge no Conference authority?

B. The question is a fair one, and I will endeavour to give it a fair answer.

1. I am not able to say to what extent those religious societies, that are governed by a Conference, have been more successful in spreading true religion and converting souls to God, than those churches which have acknowledged no human authority. I am not acquainted with the numbers that are united together in Congregational Churches, or with the increase in the numbers that has taken place in different periods of their history. The Congregationalists do not publish yearly accounts of their numbers and increase, as Connexions or Conferences generally do. I certainly feel inclined to think that the Methodists have done more towards the spread of the religion of Christ, and the salvation of souls, than the Congregationalists; but I have not in my possession the information necessary to enable me to form a judgment on the subject. In the South Sea Islands, the labours of the Congregationalists have been exceedingly successful, and I very much question whether such success can be found in the history of any religious societies under the authority of a Conference.

2. But, supposing that the Wesleyan Methodists have been much more successful in turning souls to God, and spreading abroad the blessings of salvation, than Congregationalists have been, it would not follow that the plan of churches being under the power of a Conference, was better than the plan of having all churches free. Churches under the controul of Conference might be more useful in converting souls, than other churches under no authority but that of Christ, and yet it might not be *their being under Conference* that rendered them more useful. Their greater usefulness might be owing to something else that distinguished them from the Congregational Churches. The churches under Conference, for instance, might have a better system of doctrine, and that might render them more useful; or they might have a greater variety of useful operations than the Congregational Churches, and that might render them more useful.—This has been the case, in my judgment, with the principal part of Conference Churches in our own country. The Congregational Churches generally have held the peculiar doctrines of Calvin,—doctrines which are neither calculated to make the minister zealous, nor to bring the hearers to repentance and salvation: the Methodists, on the other hand, have preached the doctrines of universal redemption, of impartial and unbounded goodness, of the universal bestowment of power to man to turn to God, and of a present salvation for all who earnestly seek it.—These, and other doctrines similar, could not fail, when preached with corresponding zeal and energy, to have a far more salutary effect upon the souls of men than the peculiarities of Calvin. Then, again, the Methodists generally have employed a greater variety of means to save souls, than the Congregationalists have done. The Methodists have had their class meetings, their band meetings, their love feasts, and their open air preachings, all of them means calculated to promote the spread of religion; while the Congregationalists have had scarcely any of these means. Then the Methodists have gone beyond the Congregationalists in holding prayer meetings, and in employing local preachers and exhorters, both of them means of mighty influence. Many Congregational Churches have great-

ly blocked up their way to usefulness, by making immersion in water a condition of church fellowship, and others have lessened their usefulness by requiring of candidates for membership, the belief of unscriptural doctrines, or subscription to a human creed. Methodist Churches have had the advantage over Congregational Churches in all these things. Nothing has been required of persons as a condition of union with Methodist Churches generally, but such a belief of Gospel truth, as led them to renounce sin, and begin heartily to seek the blessings of salvation. It is on these grounds that I account for the greater usefulness of Methodist Churches. Congregationalism, as a means of promoting the conversion of souls, has not been fairly tried. The Congregational principle has been encumbered with an unscriptural theology, and injured by an alliance with strict communion bigotry; while it has lacked many important advantages which Methodism has enjoyed. Suppose the Conference principle had been connected with the offensive parts of the doctrine of Calvin, and with the intolerance of the strict communion Baptists; and suppose it to have been separated besides from all those helps and agencies which have so generally distinguished Methodist Churches. Suppose, on the other hand, that the Congregational principle had been associated with the scriptural doctrines of Methodism, and with all those plans of useful labour which have distinguished the Methodist economy; what would have been the result then? Have we not reason to believe that the success of Congregational Churches would, in that case, have been as great as the success of Methodist Churches has been? Have we not reason to believe that their success would have been still greater?

And there is nothing to hinder the Congregational principle from being united with all that is good in the doctrines and discipline of Methodism. Churches may lay aside the authority of Conference, and still retain the pure truth of the Gospel. Churches may also have scriptural terms of communion, and employ local preachers, exhorters, and missionaries, and have class meetings, and fellowship meetings, and lovefeasts, and prayer meetings, and every thing else that is good, and yet be free from the authority of Conference. Churches may also have a variety of ministers, and they may also have a change of ministers, and yet not be subject to the authority of a Conference. In short, there is nothing evil from which the Congregational principle may not be separated; and there is nothing good with which it may not be united. Every thing that is calculated to render a church extensively useful in promoting the spread of religion, and in converting men's souls to God, may be as easily associated with the principle of Congregationalism, as with the principle of subjection to a Conference. In the Congregational churches which have been formed lately, every thing which is truly good in Methodism is associated with the Congregational principle. The churches have local preachers, and class meetings, and prayer meetings, and scriptural terms of communion, and every thing else that is good, that is to be found in those churches which are placed under Conferences. They have also some good things amongst them, such as young men's meetings, meetings for free ministration, and the like, which are not yet to be found in connection with Conference Methodism.

W. And how does the system seem to work?

B. As well as can be. In some of the new Congregational churches, there are souls converted to God every week; and so far as I have heard, things are going on favourably in almost all of them. What should hinder the system from working well? There is nothing but the principle of freedom from Conference authority between us and you, that you object to, and how should freedom from the authority of Conference prevent us from doing well? How should churches do any better for being bound to do in all things, not what they believe God requires them to do, but what a number of erring men may require them to do? The *churches themselves* cannot grow up to manhood in Christ Jesus, so long as they are in subjection to the authority of man: how then can they be instrumental in propagating a manly Christianity among others? Subjection to human authority tends to sink men lower in piety, rather than to raise men higher. All true piety consists in obedience to God; in endeavours to please God: but when men are placed under subjection to men, and called upon continually to attend to the dictates of earthly authority, they are in danger of losing sight of God altogether, and of allowing his commands to slip out of mind. Respect to the traditions or commandments of men, has always tended to make of no effect the commandments of God; or, in other words, to destroy true piety altogether.

Again; at the time the Wesleyan body succeeded most in turning souls to God, it was governed, in a great measure, on the Congregational principle. For many years, at first, the Methodist Churches had no ruler but Christ, and no creed or law but the Sacred Scriptures. Subjection to Conference had no existence. Conference had no power whatever, except to counsel and exhort. The members of Conference themselves were free. Conferences, at the beginning, were what the word itself implies, Conversations, or meetings of Friends for the purpose of conversing about the interests of religion. The parties thus meeting and conversing, had no power, either over the churches or over one another. They passed no laws, they established no creed, and they acknowledged no law or creed themselves, but the Sacred Oracles. The principles on which they met, and for which they contended, were the broad unlimited principles of liberty laid down in the New Testament. Their language when they met was, "Let us search our principles to the bottom; if they be true, investigation will confirm them; if they be false, the sooner they are overturned the better." On this principle they proceeded, testing all things by the Oracles of God. And when they had come to such conclusions as were satisfactory to their own minds, they did not bind their judgment upon others, but left every one free to judge for himself, and to act in accordance with his own convictions. In one of the early Conferences, it was asked, "How far is each one bound by the judgment of a majority of his brethren?" And the answer was, "In doctrinal matters each one is bound by the judgment of the majority of his brethren, so far as his own judgment is convinced; and in practical matters, each one is bound so far as his conscience is satisfied. Farther than this, no man is bound by the judgment of any man, or any number of men, whether Bishops, Convocation, or what else. This is that great principle of the reformation; every man must judge for himself, because every one must give an account of himself to God."*

These were the principles on which the Methodists proceeded in the beginning. The preachers and the churches were free; as free as the Saviour designed them to be; as free as the Congregational churches lately established are. And it was when the Methodists were thus free,—it was when they were so near to the Congregational system,—it was when the principles for which my Wesleyan friend contends, the principles of subjection to the authority of Conference, had no existence, that Methodism exerted its purest and its mightiest influence.

The idea of Methodism becoming a sect, and of Conference becoming a legislative body, never entered into the mind of Wesley for many years. So far was he from intending a number of individuals to have authority to make laws for the Methodist preachers, and for the Methodist Societies, that, if I am not greatly mistaken, he expressed a hope, if such a thing should ever come to pass, that God would blot out the

* I do not think that, in these quotations, I have given the words exactly, but I have given the sense. I would have given the exact words as they stand in the large minutes, but on referring to the new edition of Wesley's works, published by the Methodist Book-room, I cannot find them. The words are in the older edition; I have read them there time after time; but I have not my copy at hand just now? How is it that these important words have been left out of the new edition of Wesley's Works? Has it been done designedly? Are there parties who are making an attempt to corrupt or mutilate Wesley's Works? Are his liberal, catholic, truly Christian sentiments to be suppressed? I should like this matter to be explained by the Book-room.

name of Methodism from the face of the earth. If, then, the Methodist Conference had formerly no authority over the churches, and if the churches had no authority over each other; and if, when the Methodist churches and Methodist preachers were thus free, submitting to no authority but the authority of Christ, they were more useful in spreading true religion and converting souls to God than at present, are we not justified in concluding, that the Congregational principle is more friendly to the spread of religion and the conversion of souls, than the principle of subjection to the authority of Conference?

W. But though Conference had no authority in those days, Wesley himself had.

B. Wesley had *influence*, but not *authority*. He claimed no right to rule men in opposition to their own judgments and consciences; it is impossible he could do that, without acting in direct opposition to the principles on which he set out. And as for influence, there is nothing in the Congregational system to prevent men from having all the influence that Wesley possessed, provided they excel, as much as Wesley, in understanding and piety.

W. But Wesley used authority: he made laws, and he told his preachers that their business was not to mend the laws, but to observe them.

B. Then in those cases Wesley violated the great principles of Christian liberty on which he set out. And to his substitution of *authority* for the influence of truth and love, may be traced, perhaps, in a great measure, the declension of thorough-going, scriptural piety among the preachers and people. Still, Wesleyan Methodism, in the days of its greatest purity and power, knew nothing of the subjection of its churches and ministers to a Conference; so that to attribute the success of Methodism, in promoting the spread of evangelical religion, and the conversion of souls, to the influence of the principle of subjection to Conference, is altogether unwarrantable. In short, I have no doubt but that so far as Methodist Societies have surpassed Congregational Churches in usefulness, they have surpassed them in consequence of preaching the Gospel in greater purity, and labouring with greater zeal and faithfulness.

W. But if it had not been for the power of Conference, the Gospel would have been preached with no greater purity among the Methodists, than among the Congregationalists. The Congregational principle cannot be so good as you represent it, or it would have kept people from embracing an inferior system of theology.

B. You appear to be speaking now without proper consideration. Wesley and his fellow helpers did not owe their clearer views of Gospel truth to the authority of Conference; they had those views, and preached them too, before the power of Conference had come into being. Nor did Brown and his companions, the founders of the old Congregational Churches, slide into Calvinistic errors through the influence of the Congregational system; they were Calvinists before they embraced the Congregational principle.

W. How is the orthodoxy of churches to be maintained without a legislative Conference?

B. What is to prevent the orthodoxy of the churches from being maintained, so long as both preachers and people have the Sacred Scriptures to consult, and the light of that Spirit by which the Scriptures were written, to assist them in understanding their meaning? What can a Conference do to maintain the orthodoxy of churches, more than churches themselves can do? Conferences have often *corrupted* the doctrine of Christ, but as for maintaining its purity, I am not aware that they have ever done much in that way. Men cannot become a Conference, as Conferences now-a-days are constituted, without setting at nought part of the doctrine of Christ. Nothing is plainer in the whole religion of Christ than that Christ's disciples ought not to be called masters, or to have dominion or authority over their brethren; and I cannot expect men to do much for the maintenance of orthodoxy, when the very first step they take is to adopt, as the fundamental principle of their proceedings, one of the most heterodox principles in the universe. Conferences have far more need of free churches to keep them from going wrong, than churches have of Conferences to keep *them* from going wrong.

I would observe, in conclusion, that though I believe the Congregational principle,—the principle that every church should be free,—to be the principle of the Gospel, and though I believe that this principle of liberty is more friendly to the prosperity of churches and the conversion of souls, than the principle of the subjection of churches to Conferences or to each other, yet I have no idea that the mere adoption of this principle will make the church prosperous, or bring about the conversion of souls. If churches would prosper as they ought, the members must be diligent in all the means of grace; and if they would be instrumental in converting sinners, they must preach the full, pure Gospel of Christ, and they must preach it with the zeal and diligence of their Master. The adoption of the Congregational principle by churches, will, if the churches do their duty in other respects, secure them from many serious evils, and put into their hands many important advantages; but all this will avail them nothing, unless they labour honestly and diligently to understand and practise the whole Gospel of Christ. We have had proofs sufficient that principles of church government are not trifles; but we have had proofs quite as convincing that they are not every thing. The great thing is, for every member of the church to labour to understand and do the whole will of God. This is the great principle of all true reform. It is true, that in order to understand the will of God, we must break loose from the chains of human creeds and traditions; and it is also true, that in order to carry out the principles of the Gospel in practice, we must throw off subjection to Conference authority; but breaking loose from human creeds and traditions, and throwing off the yoke of Conferences and Popes, will avail nothing of themselves. If we would reform the church to any good purpose, or if we would contribute more extensively than others to the conversion of souls, and the speedy regeneration of the world, we must excel others in knowledge and zeal, in labours and in sacrifices for the cause of God. When we have done with the authority of Conferences, we are at liberty to publish a cheap and catholic periodical, to sell cheap books, to furnish cheap and useful tracts; but our liberty will not publish cheap periodicals, or furnish a new bookroom for us. If our liberty is to be a real and lasting blessing, either to ourselves or to others, it must be accompanied with a liberal use of our property for God, with a diligent improvement of our minds in knowledge and true holiness, with a faithful employment of our time and influence, and with a steady, determined, persevering course of self-denying, disinterested, and united labour in God's cause. If talking about liberty would have converted the world, the world would have been converted long ago: but it will not. If we would hasten the conversion of the world, we must have the spirit of our Master, and we must be willing to share his trials and sufferings. Let us unite freedom, the glorious freedom of the Gospel, with such a course of life and labour as we behold in the Saviour, and the world will acknowledge us as its benefactors through every coming generation.

AN ARGUMENT AGAINST LUXURY.

When labour is employed in producing articles of real utility, there is a permanent increase to the capital of the community. The manufacturer gets the value of his article, say, in money, and the purchaser of the useful article, in consuming or using that article, derives his money's worth, in strength or protection. But when labour is employed in producing an article of luxury, there is no real addition to the capital of the community, and consequently, that labour is a dead loss, not indeed to the producer, but still to the community. For the consumer of the luxury loses the price he paid for it, and gets no real value in return. His real wants are still to be supplied. Every hour spent in the production of luxuries, therefore, is a loss to the community of so much real capital as might be produced during that time.

TEMPERANCE.

Dear Sirs,

As a commercial traveller I have an opportunity of hearing and witnessing the progress of temperance societies, and it rejoices my heart to state the gradual improvement I find in the habits of all classes in the various towns I pass through.

The time is evidently come for a more diffused and intense illumination of the world. The darkness that rested upon the people is breaking up and passing away. Indications of a second Reformation—an era that shall outshine that of Luther and of Knox—an age more glorious than that in which Europe rose, like a giant refreshed, from her sleep of centuries—are discerned on every hand. The sun of knowledge rises in the heavens, and gives forth its rays with a strength and fervency heretofore unknown. The splendour of the morn of intelligence gilds no more only the lofty elevations of society, but descends into the vales, and gleams through the tangled and once impenetrable wilds. Teetotalism opens the path into the desert, and penetrates into the remote regions, shedding light where darkness held her reign, and dissipating the dense and heavy masses of ignorance and prejudice.

We have wonderful encouragements to perseverance. I do not find it difficult to abstain from intoxicating beverages. It only requires a little moral courage, which no bad or foolish custom can successfully withstand; and a little tact and urbanity in doing it, so as not needlessly to displease those who think and act differently.

I am acquainted with nine or ten commercial men who abstain. These are but few among many; but recollect, eight years ago the few at Preston, and now behold what has been done by persevering agitation! I know two teetotalers who were waiters at inns, also three ostlers and two boots. The landlady of a principal inn in a Northern city has ceased to partake of these drinks, though, like some of our half-made teetotalers, she continues to provide them for others. She told me, the other week, how her health was improved, and declared her intention to continue a teetotaler.

As a commercial traveller I have an opportunity of doing much good, by precept and example. I distribute books and pamphlets, and occasionally speak "a word in season." I feel myself a responsible being, who must have to account for the opportunities placed in my hand. I am desirous to do what good I can, and love to be associated with the wise and virtuous in any way that will tend to improve mankind.

Hoping these few remarks may tend to create a spirit of emulation, and encourage those who are yet halting to come and join us, and wishing you may be long spared to advocate our cause, I subscribe myself, respectfully,

A Commercial Traveller.

A HIGHLAND FISHERMAN.

Two fishermen, a few years ago, were mending their nets on board their vessel on one of the lakes in the interior of Argyleshire, at a considerable distance from the shore, when a sudden squall upset their boat. One of them could not swim, and the only oar which floated was caught by him that could swim.—His sinking companion cried, "Ah, my poor wife and children, they must starve now!" "Save yourself, I will risk my life for their sakes!" said the other, thursting the oar under the arms of the drowning man. He committed himself instantly to the deep, expecting to perish, for the safety of his companion. That moment the boat struck the bottom, and started the other oar by their side, and thus both were enabled to keep afloat till they were picked up.

ECONOMY AND LIBERALITY.

When the money to build Bethlehem Hospital was being collected, those who were employed to solicit donations, went to a small house, the door of which being half opened they overheard the master, an old man, scolding his female servant for having thrown away a match without using both ends. After diverting themselves some time with the dispute, they presented themselves before the old gentleman, and stated the object of their visit; though, from what had just passed, they en tertained very little hope of success. The supposed miser, however, no sooner understood their business than he stepped into a closet, from whence he brought a bag, and counted out four hundred guineas, which he presented to them. No astonishment could exceed that of the collectors at this unexpected occurrence; they expressed their surprise; and told the old gentleman that they had overheard his quarrel with the servant. "Gentlemen," said he, "your surprise is occasioned by a thing of very little consequence. I keep house and save money in my own way; the first furnishes me with the means of doing the other. With regard to benevolent donations, you may always expect most from prudent people who keep their own accounts." When he had thus addressed them, he requested them to withdraw without the smallest ceremony, to prevent which, he shut the door, not thinking, probably, so much of the four hundred guineas which he had just given away, as of the match which had been carelessly thrown into the fire.

A TERRIFIED PERSECUTOR.

The means employed, by the blessing of God, to make sinners acquainted with their sinfulness and danger, and to lead them to implore his mercy, are, indeed, various. To some he speaks in the thunders of his law; others are attracted by the soothing sound of his Gospel; while the elements of nature itself have sometimes been the means of exciting attention and deep feeling. The excellent Isaac Ambrose, in his "Treatise on Angels," gives an account of a profane persecutor, who was brought to seek the mercy of God in a remarkable manner. He was out on a journey, with his pious wife, when they were overtaken with a storm of thunder and lightning.—He was seized with great terror, and his wife inquired into its cause. "Why," asked he, "are not you afraid?" She replied, "No, not at all; for I know that it is the voice of my Heavenly Father; and shall a child be afraid of a kind Father's voice?" The man began to reflect, that Christians must have within them a divine principle of which the world is ignorant, or they could not enjoy such calmness when the rest of the world were filled with horror. He went to Mr. Bolton, an eminent minister, to whom he had been opposed, acknowledged and lamented his sins, and furnished good evidence of a change of heart.

INTELLIGENCE.

On the evenings of the 19th and 20th of last month, J. Barker lectured on Evangelical Reform, in the Commercial Rooms, Leeds. Though the evenings were very dark and wet, yet the rooms were filled, and the audience were very attentive. Several questions were asked on the first evening, respecting the principles of church government advocated by the lecturer, and an interesting conversation took place on the subject. The principles of Christian liberty, as reduced to practice in the Congregational churches lately formed in various parts of the country, appeared to meet with a favourable reception from the audience generally. A conversation afterwards took place on the subject of laying up for ourselves treasures on earth. The lecturer contended that all property should be in some way employed in doing good, and that no part of it should be spent in extravagance, or laid up for ourselves as a security against future and uncertain calamities; while some others seemed to think the doctrine was too strict. The Scriptures appeared to be on the side of the lecturer, though something of earthly feeling and worldly wisdom pleaded powerfully on the other side. The conversation was conducted with much Christian temper, and the truth, as it is in Jesus, seemed to make its way.

After the lecture, on the following evening, a discussion took place between the lecturer and one of the audience, a Wesleyan, on the subject of Congregationalism. The Wesleyan contended that Congregationalism had not been so successful as Wesleyanism, in promoting the interests of religion, and the salvation of souls. The lecturer replied, 1. That it might be that Congregationalism had not been fairly tried,—that it had been generally associated with certain doctrines that were calculated to retard the spread of Gospel truth, and throw obstacles in the way of the conversion of souls. That Wesleyan Methodism might owe its success, in spreading the blessings of religion, more to the purity of its doctrines, and the greater zeal and labours of its ministers and converts, than to the superiority of its principles of church government,—that if the doctrines, and zeal, and varied labours of Wesleyan Methodism had been associated with the liberty of Congregationalism, it might have proved still more successful in spreading the religion of Christ than it had done—that the Congregationalists might have done incalculably more good, if they had associated with the independence of churches, the pure unadulterated doctrines of the Gospel, and that zeal and those various kinds of labours, with which the Conference principle has been associated. The discussion on this subject excited great interest, and was continued for a considerable length of time, but as the substance of what was said is given in page 311, &c. of this number, we need say nothing further about it here.

After the discussion, a number of friends in Leeds, who were friendly to the principles of evangelical reform, arranged for a meeting among themselves, for the purpose of conversing with each other, and of arranging for further meetings. A goodly number, we are informed, met at the time appointed, and there is reason to believe that lasting good will be done in Leeds.

On the evenings of Thursday and Friday, the 21st and 22nd of last month, J. Barker lectured on Evangelical Reform, at Sheffield. Though but one day's public notice had been given of the lectures, there was a very considerable audience, especially on the second night. A little conversation took place after each lecture, but no lengthened discussion. John Hudston had been invited to attend, and repeat in J. Barker's hearing certain statements which he had made a short time before in a social meeting, but J. Hudston declined repeating his statements on that occasion. He was, however, present at the lecture, and promised to furnish J. Barker with a statement, in writing, of what he had said at the social meeting; but he has not yet done so. J. Hudston also offered to meet J. Barker in public discussion, but he has broken his engagement. To take away from J. Hudston all excuse for declining the discussion, J. Barker has offered to meet him on his own terms, but J. Hudston, in his last letter, refuses to enter into discussion altogether, and gives all his promises and engagements to the winds.*

A Socialist or two contended that the principles advocated by the lecturer could not be reduced to practice; but the lecturer proved, both by arguments and facts, that the principles he advocated might be reduced to practice. A very favourable impression appeared to be left on the minds of the people. The lectures were delivered in a large chapel in Rockingham Street. W. Trotter was present, and took part in the services.

From Sheffield J. Barker proceeded to Nottingham, and in the forenoon and afternoon of the Sabbath, preached in the large market place. The regular bellman of the town had refused to cry the meetings, so that a bellman generally employed by the Chartists was got to cry them, which circumstance, as it was afterwards ascertained, created a supposition that the preacher was some Chartist lecturer, and a number of Chartists assembled, expecting to hear a Chartist sermon. The meeting commenced at half-past nine. After reading a portion of Christ's Sermon on the Mount, and making remarks on it as he passed along, J. B. spake at some length on the nature and excellency of the Gospel of Christ. After the sermon a conversation followed, partly between the preacher and some well-disposed persons who were wishful for information, and partly between the preacher and a number of Socialists, who appeared to be desirous to cavil, and to do mischief. The whole terminated peacefully, and satisfactorily. In the afternoon, about half-past one, the preacher was at the same place again, with an audience round him still larger than the morning congregation. After reading and commenting on a portion of Christ's Sermon on the Mount, he spoke at length on the reasonableness and practicability of Christianity. Though the weather was very cold, the audience were remarkably attentive, and many appeared to be deeply impressed. A brief conversation followed the sermon, and the meeting separated. J. Barker had interviews with a number of friends who felt interested in the object of his travels, and who were wishful to render him assistance. J. Barker expects to visit Nottingham again shortly, and hold meetings for a whole week. There is a prospect of good at Nottingham.

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* Our friends and the public may judge what credit is due to what our opponents say against us and our principles in private, and in their close meetings from the fact, that not one of them, from T. Allin to J. Hudston, dare meet the persons whose characters and principles they calumniate, in fair and honourable discussion.

On the evenings of Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, the 25th, 26th, and 27th of last month, J. Barker delivered three lectures on Evangelical Reform, in the Lancasterian Schoolroom, Dudley. The first lecture was on the Great Hindrances to the more rapid Spread of the Religion of Christ, and the Speedy Conversion of the World. The second was on the Doctrine of Christ respecting the Acquisition, the Accumulation, and the Use of Wealth. The third was on the Duty of Christians with respect to Trade, Worldly Associations, and Temperance, and on the New Testament Doctrine of Liberty. In the bills announcing the lectures, the lecturer had expressed his willingness to answer any questions on the subjects discussed by him, as well as to hold a discussion on the principles advocated by him, for an hour, or an hour and a half, after each lecture. The room was very much crowded, and it was calculated that from eight hundred to a thousand persons were present each night.

On the first evening the great mass of the people appeared to have come to the meeting under the influence of strong prejudice and very violent feelings against the lecturer; and it seemed doubtful, for a time, whether he would be able to obtain a hearing or not. A friend of the lecturer's was proposed as chairman, but the meeting rejected the proposal by an overwhelming majority, and appointed as chairman a person who was understood to be opposed to the lecturer. After a while the lecturer was permitted to speak. He had not spoken fifteen minutes, before the meeting appeared to be perfectly calmed, and at the close of the lecture, the meeting, which had at first shown such a power of prejudice, and such a determined feeling against the lecturer, appeared to have been greatly changed. The feeling seemed to be as strong and as general in favour of the lecturer, towards the close of the lecture, as it had been against him at the beginning. At the close of the lecture, J. Bakewell, from Manchester, stood up to oppose the lecturer. He did not attempt to grapple with the principles advanced in the lecture, but commenced an attack upon the lecturer himself. J. Barker replied, refuting in few words, the observations of his opponent. The discussion continued for some time, but the opposition made to the lecturer, so far from lessening the feeling of the meeting in his favour and in favour of his principles, seemed to increase it, and the result of the evening's labour was exceedly delightful. When J. Bakewell's friends saw what was the result of the meeting, they endeavoured to prevent J. Barker and his friends from having the room any more, and on the Tuesday morning, J. Barker received notice, that he could not be allowed to lecture in the place again. In the afternoon, however, J. Bakewell's friends offered to allow J. Barker to have the room, provided he would allow J. Bakewell to have twice as much time in the discussion after the lecture as himself; namely, for J. Bakewell to speak twenty minutes first, J. Barker twenty minutes after, and then J. Bakewell to speak twenty minutes after, and conclude the meeting, without allowing J. Barker liberty to reply.—J. Barker refused to agree to such an unfair proposal. J. Barker was, nevertheless, allowed to proceed with his lectures. The results of the lecture and discussion on the second evening, were more favourable to the cause of the lecturer still, and the cause of his adversaries appeared to be utterly ruined. At the close of the second evening's meeting, it was announced by J. Bakewell's friends, that S. Hulme would deliver a lecture on the Thursday evening, to expose the inconsistencies and misrepresentations of J. Barker. J. Barker asked if they would allow him to reply to the lecture, as he had allowed them to reply to his lectures. He was answered, NO. J. Barker asked if they would allow him to ask any questions. He was answered, NO. This refusal to allow even a question to be asked, called forth from the meeting powerful expressions of disapprobation. The third evening, James Brown, a friend of J. Barker's, and a member of the Society of Friends,—the same individual who, when proposed as chairman the first evening, was rejected by such a large majority,—was chosen chairman by the meeting almost unanimously. The results of the lecture and discussions on the third evening, were much the same as the results of the lectures and discussions of the preceding evenings.

The feeling in favour of the principles advocated by the lecturer was very powerful, and very general; it seemed, in fact, to be overwhelming. At the close of the discussion, the people who, on the first evening, came together so prejudiced, and so violently excited against the lecturer, passed a vote of thanks to the lecturer, for the manner in which he had inculcated and defended the principles of Evangelical Reform.* So powerful is truth! so feeble is error when dragged from its dark and secret lurking places, and forced into open combat.

J. Barker and W. Trotter attended the lectures of S. Hulme and T. Allin, on the Thursday evening, but they were not permitted to reply, nor even to propose a question. Twice or thrice J. Barker or W. Trotter requested permission to make one statement, or to propose one question, but they were instantly answered by the cry, "Put them out; put them out." The lectures continued about three hours and a half; they were quite personal, and consisted of one long unbroken series of misstatements, and misrepresentations. It is not necessary to enter into particulars here, as J. Barker, who, along with his friend Trotter, took notes of the lectures, has published a reply. The pamphlet, entitled "*Truth against Misrepresentation*," may be had of those who sell the *Investigator*. The price is three half-pence.

Since the last intelligence was given, the churches at Walker, Wallsend, St. Peter's Quay, and Elswick, have engaged S. S. Barton, late a missionary in Ireland, as their pastor. The churches generally are in a prosperous state. The second Quarterly Meeting of the church connected with Salem Chapel, Newcastle-on-Tyne, and of the churches at Wallsend, Walker, Elswick, and St. Peter's, was held on the 19th of last month. The meetings were quite peaceful, and exceedingly pleasant and profitable. The members of the Newcastle Church ate and drank together in the evening, and afterwards spoke together on the interests of religion. It was a truly Christian love-feast.

T. Smith has been spending some time in the North lately: he is at present engaged, in connection with W. Trotter, in the Bradford circuit. God is still sending forth labourers into the harvest; and yet, compared with the work to be accomplished, "the labourers are few."

We are behind-hand with the answers to questions, but we hope our correspondents will not be impatient; we hope to give answers to several questions in the next two numbers.

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* We do not approve of the plan of passing votes of thanks; the best plan is for people to show their gratitude to those who advocate the truth, by faithfully reducing it to practice.

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THE RIGHT OF PRIVATE JUDGMENT.

In the discussion of controverted subjects nothing is of greater importance than that the question in debate be thoroughly understood. A mistake as to the import of the proposition itself, must of necessity lead to serious mistakes in the management of the debate; and, in fact, a great portion of the controversies on religious subjects that agitate the minds of men, arise from this source. A proposition is laid down by one individual, another mistakes its meaning; he speaks or writes in opposition to it, as he imagines; but that which he really opposes, is not the proposition itself, but the false construction he has put upon it. The first replies; but, instead of having to establish the proposition he first laid down, and answer arguments alleged against it, he has to show that his opponent has misunderstood his sentiments. His opponent, unwilling to acknowledge the blunder that he has committed, answers again to show, that he understood the proposition aright; and so the real question at issue is completely lost sight of in a vain and angry dispute about the meaning of words.

Now, I am anxious to avoid this on the present occasion. I am solicitous, if any one should object to the doctrines I teach on the subject of this article, that he should oppose the sentiments which I really hold, the doctrines which I really teach; and for this reason,—to prevent all misunderstanding of my views,—I shall state, in the first place, what I do *not* mean by "the right of private judgment."

1. I do not mean that people have a right to think and act as they please. I believe no man has a right to make his own pleasure the rule or reason of his conduct. It should be our object, not to please ourselves, but to please God. God is the author of our being; from him we derive all our powers; and of course to him we are accountable for the way in which those powers are exercised. God has given us the power to examine, to reason, to judge; and to him we are responsible for the conclusions to which we come, and for the influence which these conclusions have on our tempers and deportment. God is able to determine when our errors are criminal in their origin, and when they arise from circumstances over which we have no controul; and in those cases where our errors proceed from sinful dispositions or sinful practices, God is able to estimate the exact amount of our guilt, and deal with us accordingly. I would not, on any account, attempt to diminish a sense of responsibility to God in the minds of my readers; so far from this, I would fain impress it on all who may read these lines, that for every exercise of their judgment they are responsi-

ble to God; that there is a day coming in which we must render an account to the Great Judge of all, for every sentiment we entertain, and for every action we perform. And one principal reason why I would have every one to judge for himself, independently of human controul, is, that for all our decisions we are responsible to God.

2. I do not mean that we should accept of no assistance from each other in forming our judgments of things. God has placed us in circumstances which necessarily render us dependent on each other to a considerable extent; and he has done this that kind sympathy and benevolent affections may be cherished by ceaseless endeavours to be helpful to one another. The endless diversity in the constitution and circumstances of mankind is to be attributed to this cause. God gives to one man what he withholds from another; this other possesses something else of which the former is devoid, and things seem to be thus arranged that each individual may feel how intimately he is connected with all besides, and how much he is dependent upon every other individual of the race.

Nothing can furnish a better illustration of this principle, than the endless variety in the gifts and endowments which God has distributed amongst the members of his church. To some he has given a quick perception, to others a retentive memory; some he has qualified for the special study of one class of subjects; others for the special consideration of another class. And then, besides, some are young, and others are old; some have just entered on a religious course, and others have been walking in the paths of righteousness for many years. Some have been favoured with a liberal education in their youth; others have had but few advantages in early life. Some have a great deal of leisure time, and others are almost incessantly engaged in worldly business. Thus widely differing from each other in constitution and in circumstances, it is clear that some of God's people must be possessed of information of which others are destitute; while the latter perhaps may be able to instruct the former on some other subject, to which the former have not rendered so much attention, or for the study of which they are not so well qualified as the latter. It is therefore plainly the duty of all God's people, to exercise their gifts for each other's welfare; and so far from wishing that any should decline to avail themselves of the assistance of their brethren, it is my conviction that all should be learners and teachers in their turns; and one great reason why I would have men to judge for themselves is this, that all restrictions on the right of private judgment are so many obstacles to that free interchange of sentiment, which is indispensable to mutual instruction in the knowledge of religious truth. I would have every member of Christ free to learn, of all his fellow-members, whatever it is in their power to teach; and I would have every one as free to communicate to others what he has learned himself.

3. I do not consider the right of private judgment to be incompatible with all discipline in the church of Christ. I know that I have been charged with this; that I have been represented as holding sentiments that would admit all sorts of people into the church of Christ. But those who thus represent my sentiments, know not what they say. Christ himself has established a system of discipline in his word, and to that system I would most rigidly adhere. Christ has given full and explicit directions as to who shall be admitted into his church, and who shall be rejected from it; and by the directions of the Saviour I would faithfully abide. The fact of the case is this; prevailing systems of church discipline do not, to me, seem half so strict, in many respects, as that which Christ has established; while, in other respects, those systems are far stricter than his. My views on the subject of discipline are simply these; we should receive into the church all whom we have reason to believe Christ has received into his favour; and we should reject from communion all who, we have reason to believe, are rejected by the Redeemer. Now the churches, generally, act upon an opposite plan to this. They receive numbers who, they have every reason to believe,

are rejected by Christ, on account of their unfaithfulness to his service; they reject others, respecting whom they cannot doubt but that Christ has received them as his faithful, obedient followers. This is the evil against which I contend. I do regard discipline as essential to the preservation and prosperity of the church of Christ; but Christ's discipline seems to me perfectly sufficient, and the best that can be devised: human innovations on that discipline, I consider as unnecessary as they are injurious.

4. I do not mean, by the right of private judgment, "that every minister has a right to promulgate *any opinions* which he may entertain, however contrary to the principles of the community of which he is a member, and that the community has no right to interfere, or to remove him for such proceedings." Such are the sentiments attributed to me in a printed document, and published to the world under the sanction of the late Conference of the Methodist New Connexion. But they are sentiments which I never expressed; they are sentiments which I sincerely abhor. A minister might "entertain opinions" at variance with the Divine Authority of the sacred volume; he might "entertain" the "opinion" that Jesus is not the Son of God, or that he has not risen from the dead: he might "entertain opinions" favourable to idleness, or adultery, or covetousness, or theft. But ought he to be at liberty to promulgate those sentiments in the church? Ought the church to be deprived of the power to deal with him if he should endeavour to promulgate such opinions as these? Every reader instantly gives the answer, NO. And why not? 1. Because every dictate of reason, and justice, and religion, forbid that a man who rejects the Bible, should pretend to be a teacher of Bible truths: that a man who does not believe in Christ, should pretend to be a minister of Christ. 2. Because the truth is so plainly taught on these subjects in the Gospel, that no man who reads it with an honest mind and a pious heart, can fall into error on points like these. 3. Because there are specific directions given in the New Testament for the removal of such persons as these, after proper admonition and opportunity for repentance, both from the ministry and the church. If any one wishes to see the question discussed, whether I have said or done any thing to favour the views which I here disclaim, he may see it in a pamphlet called "The Justice and Forbearance of the Methodist New Connexion Conference," &c. P. 29.

I hope that the reader understands by this time, that the sentiments for which I plead are, not that men have a right to think and act as they please; not that we ought to decline assistance from others in forming our judgments of religious truth; not that the church should lay aside all discipline, and admit all sorts of people within the pale of her communion; not that "every minister has a right to promulgate any opinions which he may entertain."—Whatever my sentiments on the subject may be, these are not my sentiments; and whoever may choose to oppose such sentiments as these, opposes sentiments which I abhor equally with himself. What I do mean, by the right of private judgment, I shall now proceed to explain.

What *I do* mean is simply this: that every man has an inalienable right to judge for himself what it is that God requires, and to act according to his judgment. After a few words in explanation of this proposition, I shall proceed to lay before my readers the grounds on which it seems to me to rest; and then I shall endeavour to answer a number of objections and enquiries which may suggest themselves to the reader's mind, or be presented by those who differ from the writer on this important subject.

Before I enter on this discussion, however, I would premise, 1. That no one is responsible for the sentiments contained in these articles but myself. Neither the *Investigator*, nor those who conduct it, nor the churches with which I am associated, are in any sense, or to any extent, responsible for the principles which I advocate. They are my individual sentiments, and no one is accountable for them but myself. 2. My only object in publishing my views on this subject is to promote the interests of truth; and if, in the progress of the discussion, it should appear that any of my sentiments are erroneous, I shall most gladly acknowledge my mistake, and by the most public recantation of my views, make as ample an atonement as it is in my power to make. No man can do me a greater kindness than to convince me of any error that I may have imbibed; and even if he should not proceed about his work in the kindest way, the value of the benefit he confers is a full compensation for any unkindness there may be in his manner of conferring it. I am aware that it is possible to be deceived in such matters as these; but if I know any thing whatever of the state of my own mind, my only reason for publishing my views on the subject in hand, is a deep conviction of their truth and importance; and if it should be proved that this conviction is not well founded, and that the truth is on the other side of the question, I shall still rejoice that the truth is ascertained and made known. I wish no principles to prevail any further than they are true; and my anxiety is not that this or that set of opinions should prove to be true, but that the truth itself should be clearly discovered and widely disseminated. I shall now proceed first to explain, and then to defend, what at present seems to me to be the truth on this subject.

The proposition to which I would call the attention of the reader, then, is this—That it is the inalienable right of every man to judge for himself what it is that God requires, and to act according to his judgment. Every one that makes the slightest pretensions to piety, acknowledges that we ought to obey God rather than man. This is agreed on all hands. The question is, has each individual a right to judge for himself what it is that God requires? or shall he implicitly receive the decisions of others on this point? Now it seems to me that each individual should judge for himself as to what God requires; and render implicit submission to the judgment of no other man or body of men in matters of religious truth or duty.

Another observation that I wish to make is this; that the very endeavour to ascertain what God requires, supposes a disposition to comply with his requirements. This is the very essence of piety. It is superior to all notions and ceremonies; it is that without which ceremonies and notions are of no avail. An anxiety to know God's will, in order that we may do it, is the surest evidence of love to God; and though faith, and hope, and love are all important, the greatest of the three is love. The right, then, for which I contend, is not a right to entertain any opinions that may be commended to us by considerations of worldly interests, selfish ambition, or fleshly gratification; it is not a right to embrace sentiments which are obviously vicious in their tendency, and which can only be designed as an apology for immoralities in practice: the only right for which I contend is the right to search the Scriptures diligently and freely for myself; the right to receive what the Scriptures, on diligent, prayerful examination, appear to me to teach, and to reject whatever the Scriptures seem to me to discountenance or condemn, as well as the right to act on the conclusions to which I am thus conducted; in short, as I have elsewhere expressed it, the right "to act at all times, and under all circumstances, as a sense of duty dictates, whatever may be the requirements of any earthly authority." This, and this alone, is the right for which I plead.

1. The first argument by which this right appears to me to be established, is derived from the fact, that God has endowed every man with a capacity to judge for himself. And why should God give men a capacity to judge for themselves, if he did not intend them to exercise that capacity? God has given us eyes,—for what purpose, but that we may see? God has given us ears,—for what purpose, if not that we may hear? God has given us hands,—for what object, except that we should employ them? God has given us feet,—for what purpose, but that we may walk abroad? God has also given us an understanding to apprehend the meaning of a statement when it is made to us; he has given us reason whereby we may compare that statement, thus understood, with any given standard of truth, and determine whether they agree or disagree with each other. And why has God

given us powers like these, if he did not intend us to put them forth? You would deem it a serious encroachment on the liberties which God intended you to enjoy, were you to be deprived of the use of your eyes or ears, of your hands or feet. And is it not an equally serious encroachment on your liberties, to be denied the right to exercise your understanding and your judgment? Nay, considering the high origin and noble destiny of the mind; considering the vast and important consequences which depend on the exercise of your thinking and reasoning powers; considering the extent to which the great ends of your existence are bound up in the exercise of these powers; is it not a *more* serious encroachment on your liberties, to be denied the right of private judgment, than to be denied the right to see, or hear, or walk abroad? A man may be denied the right to see, by being immured in a dark cell; he may be denied the right to hear, by being shut up in utter solitude and silence; he may be denied the right to use his limbs, by having his hands loaded with manacles, and his feet with fetters; but still, if his soul be free, he may enjoy the richest happiness of which he is capable, and answer the highest objects of his existence. He may think, he may reason, he may commune with God, he may exult in his discoveries of truth, and feast on the anticipation of future and unending blessedness. But let a man's mind be fettered,—let the right to exercise freely his intellectual and moral faculties be denied him, and let him submit to such usurpation, and then, from all the loftiest, and purest, and richest enjoyments of which man is capable, he is excluded; all these he forfeits, and of these he must necessarily be devoid. Oh, if I am to be reduced to this alternative—if either my limbs are to be loaded with iron, and my body immured within the walls of a dark and gloomy cell, or my mind be fettered, my spirit be enthralled;—if one of these evils is to befall me, and I am to choose which it shall be, then I say at once, Bring your manacles, and fasten on your chains, and conduct me to the dungeon you design for me; only let my spirit be at liberty—let my mind be free, and all the sorrows of bodily slavery, I may be assisted to endure! The capacity to think and judge for ourselves, is the noblest capacity with which a merciful Creator has endowed us, and the right to exercise it cannot be denied us, without the deepest injustice and the most dreadful tyranny.

"Well, but," says an objector, "you do not mean to say that the capacity to do a thing establishes the right to do it? On that principle all kinds of villany may be vindicated. I have *the power* to put my hand into my neighbour's pocket, and abstract his purse; I have *the power* to lift my hand and smite my neighbour dead; but you do not mean to say that because I have *the power* to do these things, I have *a right* to do them?" No, I answer, no such thing. But we are not to have all men's hands tied behind them, lest they should use them in the perpetration of these wicked deeds. God has given you the power to use your hands; and that fact establishes your right to use them, though *not* your right to use them for *any purpose, in any way.* If you use them in the breach of God's commands, to Him you are responsible for such employment of them: and if you use them in such a way as to interfere with the rights of your fellow-creatures, you may justly expect them to restrain you from such a course. But because you have not a right to use your hands in acts of rebellion against God, and injustice towards your fellow-creatures, have you therefore no right to use them at all? Just so with regard to your reasoning powers. If you employ these in efforts to evade the application, or invalidate the authority of God's commands, to God are you responsible for such a perversion of your powers. Or if you employ them in efforts to corrupt the character, or to bind the consciences of your fellow-men, you need not be amazed, if all who love their liberties and love their God, withdraw from your company, and cease to hold fellowship with you. But though you have no right to exert your mental faculties to grieve your God and injure your fellow-creatures, have you therefore no right to exercise those faculties at all? The right for which I plead, be it remembered, is only the right freely and diligently to inquire what would the Lord have me to believe and do, and to act on the result of this inquiry.

"But have all men a capacity to judge for themselves," asks another objector. Yes, unquestionably, all those who are capable of moral action, or susceptible of religious instruction, are endowed with this capacity. Find a man who is incapable of judging for himself, and you find a man who is destitute of reason; for it is in the power to reason that this capacity consists. You might as well argue that men have not a capacity to see, because one here and another there is born blind, as that men have not a capacity to judge for themselves, because, in some rare cases, men are born with mental defects that disqualify them for discharging the functions of human nature. So universal is the capacity to judge for ourselves, that it constitutes the grand distinction between man and the inferior creatures. It is not the erect form, or the power of speech, that chiefly distinguishes us from the brute creation. No, it is the ability to think, to understand, to compare, to decide, to choose. It is this which renders us intelligent beings, and moral agents; and just in proportion as a man relinquishes his right to the independent exercise of his intellectual and moral powers, he unmans himself, and degrades the noble, godlike nature with which a beneficent Deity has invested him.

2. The second argument that may be adduced in favour of the right of private judgment is this; that God has not only given us the capacity to judge for ourselves, but has also furnished us with the means of judging correctly. Had God given us eyes without any objects to behold, ears without any sounds to which we might listen, and other bodily faculties without any objects on which they might be properly exercised, his conduct would have been quite unaccountable, and we could scarcely have grounded on it an argument to establish our right to use these faculties freely. And so, if God had given us a capacity to judge for ourselves, without furnishing the means of judging correctly, we should have been at a loss to account for his dealings with us, and we could certainly never have inferred, from such a procedure, that he intended us to do what he had not given us the means of doing well. But is such the course that God has taken with us? No, he who has surrounded us with beautiful and interesting objects, on which the eye may dwell with pleasure and advantage; he who has placed us in the midst of sounds which, through the medium of our ears, at once convey instruction and satisfaction to our souls,—he who has provided for every bodily faculty we possess, objects on which they may be put forth with advantage, has not dealt less favourably with the spiritual part of our being. He has given us the power to distinguish between truth and error, between right and wrong, and in his word he has provided us with an infallible touchstone, whereby the distinction may be made. The Gospel exhibits a standard *to* which we may bring, and *by* which we may test, every principle and every practice to which our attention is directed; and, by taking heed to this standard, we may shun the delusions of error, and rejoice in the revelations of eternal truth; we may avoid the ways of folly and of sin, and walk in the paths of wisdom and of piety. And God has given the Gospel to all. It is true all have not yet received it, but that is the fault of God's people, not of God himself; he has directed the Gospel to be preached, and a copy of it to be given to every creature. He has not made it the exclusive privilege and prerogative of a class to study and understand the Gospel of his Son, and impart its sacred lessons to their fellow-creatures. No, he has made it at once the privilege and the duty of every man to search the Scriptures for himself; and this fact constitutes an unanswerable argument in favour of the right of private judgment.

And even if a man be unable to *read* the Scriptures for himself, that need not prevent him from exercising his judgment as to the import of their contents. On this subject I cannot do better than present the reader with the following extract from an article by the Editor of the Methodist New Connexion Magazine. He says, "But let us suppose the case of a man who cannot read; however incapable he may be of entering into the intricacies of learning and metaphysics, he may, nevertheless, by hearing the Bible read, acquaint himself with its statements, and if he listen to them in a prayerful and humble spirit, he will find no serious difficulty in apprehending and receiving those precepts and promises which relate to his salvation. And if he listen to the discourses of a public teacher, with an earnest desire to know the truth, he will soon discover whether the instructions of this teacher are in accordance with those Scripture declarations which have been read to him. That his inability to read lays him under most serious disadvantages we admit; that he is bound, *if possible*, to remove this inability is certain; but if this be not possible, even then, if he possesses common sense and an upright intention, he will be found not incapable of coming to a correct conclusion as to what are, and what are not, the doctrines of Christianity; nor is there any need for priestly despotism to display its tender mercies, by exercising dominion over his faith." *Methodist New Connexion Magazine*, *November*, 1841, *page* 415.

3. Not only has God endowed us with a capacity to judge for ourselves, and favoured us with the means of judging correctly; he has also required us, in the most solemn terms, to exercise that capacity, and to use those means. Even under the former dispensation, dark and imperfect as it was, compared with that under which we live, God required this of his people. "Consider your ways," was the language he addressed again and again to his ancient people. And why should they consider their ways, if not to judge as to their character,—persevere in them if right, and abandon them if wrong? Such an admonition is altogether without meaning, if God's ancient people were not required, as an imperative duty, to exercise their own minds, to distinguish for themselves between what God enjoined, and what God prohibited, that they might faithfully fulfill the first, and sacredly avoid the last. "Search the Scriptures," says the Saviour. And to whom does he say this? To the Scribes and Pharisees, the authorized teachers of religion in his day? To his disciples when he sent them forth as the missionaries of the new dispensation? No, but to each individual in the vast assembled throng, and, through them, to each individual in after generations to the end of time, were these words addressed. And why search the Scriptures, if not to inquire for ourselves what are the truths they unfold, the practices they prohibit, the duties they enjoin? Why search the Scriptures, if, when these inquiries are answered, we are not to reduce to practice the lessons that we have learned? Had God intended one class of men authoritatively to interpret the Scriptures, and the rest implicitly to receive their decisions, his course would have been different: it seems perfectly plain what course he might have been expected to take. He might have been expected to address the members of the privileged class in some such language as this: "Here, I have made you the depositories of saving truth. To you it is given to study and understand this book. This privilege is withheld from others, and remember, therefore, that in examining the Scriptures, you examine for others as well as for yourselves: discharge your duty faithfully in my fear." To the mass, he might have been expected to say, "To you the Scriptures are a sealed book, presume not therefore curiously to pry into their contents. Receive implicitly the instructions of those whom I have appointed as their authorized interpreters, and reverently submit to all the injunctions they lay upon you. He that honoureth them, honoureth my word: and he who despiseth them, despiseth the representatives of the Most High." Now this would have been plain: we could have understood this. But has God adopted such a course? Has he given utterance to words like these? I almost feel as though the very supposition were an insult to God, and to that nature on which he has so deeply impressed the image of his own intelligence and freedom. No, God has committed the keeping of our consciences to no man, nor will he allow *us* to entrust any with so solemn a deposit. To search the Scriptures

for ourselves, is a duty he makes binding upon all, both young and old, rich and poor, male and female. And who is he that will venture to contradict the words of the Most High?

"Why judge ye not even of your ownselves what is right?" was the inquiry addressed by the Redeemer to the Jews. And what could this inquiry mean, if those to whom it was addressed were not both entitled, and bound in duty thus to judge for themselves what was right? "Prove all things," says the Apostle, "and hold fast that which is good." What! prove all things, and yet when we have found a certain practice to be wrong, not be at liberty to abandon it! Prove all things, and when we have found a certain course to be required of us by God, not be at liberty to adopt it! Can this be the meaning of the Apostle? No, he would have us to bring all things to the test; and when we have thus succeeded in separating the precious from the vile; when we have rejected every principle and forsaken every practice that we have ascertained to be wrong, he would have us to hold fast that which we have proved or ascertained to be good. Though all the authorities on earth, both civil and ecclesiastical, should require us to give it up, he would have us to hold it fast. If this passage does not enjoin upon us the most free and independent exercise of our judgment in religious matters, I wonder what the passage means.

"Beloved, believe not every spirit, (or teacher,) but try the spirits (or teachers) whether they are of God." In this passage we are guarded against implicity receiving the instructions of religious teachers, and exhorted to try the spirits whether they are of God. And these cautions and exhortations are not given to any particular class of officers in the church, whose function it is to test the qualifications of ministers; no, they are addressed to Christians generally, and plainly enjoin the exercise of our individual judgment on all subjects adverted to by religious teachers, or in other words, on all religious subjects. Other passages equally plain might be brought forward; but there is no necessity. The whole Bible is written on the supposition that men are bound in duty to judge for themselves what is true and what is right. Every prohibition and injunction that the Bible contains, every promise and every threat by which those injunctions and prohibitions are enforced, is an appeal to individual judgment; and if the right of private judgment is a fancy, the Bible itself is an enigma, a mystery, and a contradiction both to truth and to itself.

EQUALITY.

"It is freely granted that there are innumerable diversities among men; but be it remembered, they are ordained to bind men together, and not to subdue one to the other; ordained to give means and occasions of mutual aid, and to carry forward each and all, so that the good of all is equally intended in this distribution of various gifts. Be it also remembered, that these diversities among men are as nothing in comparison with the attributes in which they agree; and it is this which constitutes their essential equality. All men have the same rational nature, and the same power of conscience, and all are equally made for indefinite improvement of these divine faculties, and for the happiness to be found in their virtuous use. Who, that comprehends these gifts, does not see that the diversities of the race vanish before them? Let it be added, that the natural advantages which distinguish one man from another, are so bestowed as to counterbalance one another, and bestowed without regard to rank or condition in life. Whoever surpasses in one endowment, is inferior in others. Even genius, the greatest gift, is found in union with strange infirmities, and often places its possessors below ordinary men in the conduct of life. Great learning is often put to shame by the mother-wit and keen good sense of uneducated men. Nature, indeed, pays no heed to birth or condition in bestowing her favours. The noblest spirits sometimes grow up in the obscurest spheres. Thus equal are men." W. E. C.

SLAVERY.

WHY A MAN CANNOT BECOME ANOTHER'S PROPERTY.

"I COME now to what is to my own mind the great argument against seizing and using a man as property. He cannot be property in the sight of God and justice, because he is a rational, moral, immortal Being; because created in God's image, and therefore in the highest sense his child; because created to unfold godlike faculties, and to govern himself by a divine law written on his heart, and republished in God's word. His whole nature forbids that he should be seized as property. From his very nature it follows, that so to seize him is to offer an insult to his Maker, and to inflict aggravated social wrong. Into every human being God has breathed an immortal spirit, more precious than the whole outward creation. No earthly or celestial language can exaggerate the worth of a human being. No matter how obscure his condition. Thought, reason, conscience, the capacity of virtue, the capacity of Christian love, an immortal destiny, an intimate moral connection with God,—here are attributes of our common humanity which reduce to insignificance all outward distinctions, and make every human being unspeakably dear to his Maker. No matter how ignorant he may be. The capacity of improvement allies him to the more instructed of his race, and places within his reach the knowledge and happiness of higher worlds. Every human being has in him the germ of the greatest idea in the universe, the idea of God; and to unfold this is the end of his existence. Every human being has in his breast the elements of that divine everlasting law, which the highest orders of the creation obey. He has the idea of duty: and to unfold, revere, obey this, is the very purpose for which life was given. Every human being has the idea of what is meant by that word, truth; that is, he sees, however dimly, the great object of Divine and created intelligence, and is capable of ever-enlarging perceptions of truth. Every human being has affections, which may be purified and expanded into a ublime love. He has, too, the idea of happiness, and a thirst for it which cannot be appeased. Such is our nature. Wherever we see a man, we see the possessor of these great capacities. Did God make such a being to be owned as a tree or brute? How plainly was he made to exercise, unfold, improve his highest powers, made for a moral, spiritual good! and how is he wronged, and his Creator opposed, when he is forced and broken into a tool to another's physical enjoyment.

"Such a being was plainly made for an end in *himself*. He is a *person*, not a *thing*. He is an *end*, not a mere *instrument or means*. He was made for his own virtue and happiness. Is this end reconcileable with his being held and used as a chattel? The sacrifice of such a being to another's will, to another's present, outward, ill-comprehended good, is the greatest violence which can be offered to any creature of God. It is to degrade him from his rank in the universe, to make him a means, not an end, to cast him out from God's spiritual family into the brutal herd.

"Such a being was plainly made to obey a law within himself. This is the essence of a moral being. He possesses, as a part of his nature, and the most essential part, a sense of duty, which he is to reverence and follow, in opposition to all pleasure or pain, to all interfering human wills. The great purpose of all good education and discipline is, to make a man master of himself, to excite him to act from a principle in his own mind, to lead him to propose his own perfection as his supreme law and end. And is this highest purpose of man's nature to be reconciled with entire subjection to a foreign will, to an outward, overwhelming force, which is satisfied with nothing but complete submission?

"The end of such a being as we have described is, manifestly, improvement. Now it is the fundamental law of our nature, that all our powers are to improve by free exertion. Action is the indispensable condition of progress to the intellect, conscience, and heart. Is it not plain, then, that a human being cannot, without wrong, be owned by another, who claims as proprietor, the right to repress the powers of his slaves, to withhold from them the means of developement, to keep them within the limits which are necessary to contentment in chains, to shut out every ray of light and every generous sentiment which may interfere with entire subjection to his will?

"No man, who seriously considers what human nature is, and what it was made for, can think of setting up a claim to a fellow-creature. What! own a spiritual being, a being made to know and adore God, and who is to outlive the sun and stars! What! chain to our lowest uses a being made for truth and virtue! convert into a brute instrument that intelligent nature, on which the idea of duty has dawned, and which is a nobler type of God than all outward creation! Should we not deem it a wrong which no punishment could expiate, were one of our children seized as property, and driven by the whip to toil? And shall God's child, dearer to him than an only son to a human parent, be thus degraded? Every thing else may be owned in the universe; but a moral, rational being, cannot be property. Suns and stars may be owned, but not the lowest spirit. Touch any thing but this. Lay not your hand on God's rational offspring. The whole spiritual world cries out, Forbear! The highest intelligences recognise their own nature, their own rights, in the humblest human being. By that priceless, immortal spirit which dwells in him, by that likeness of God which he wears, tread him not in the dust, confound him not with the brute."

W. E. C.

UNCHARITABLE JUDGING.

One of the most fatal hindrances to charity, among Christians, is the almost universal error of confounding *mistaken* people's actions with wilful misdoings. This is especially the case with people's judgments with regard to the measures which are sometimes adopted by parties in power. People seem almost naturally to charge such parties with a lack of principle and sincerity, though perhaps, in the majority of cases, the improper measures are the result of *ignorance* or *prejudice;* both which are frequently found in connection with a considerable amount of kindness and piety. We must learn to think *charitably* of those who oppose us, and of those whose measures we cannot approve. Many persons sincerely *think* they do God service, by taking the very steps which others look upon as tyrannical and unjust. We must remember that, very often, "through ignorance they do it." We must remember that "charity hopeth all things, and endureth all things." We must not judge, lest we be judged. We must do what we believe to be right, and hope the best of those who do what clearly appears to us to be wrong. There is less of *hypocrisy* in the world than is sometimes imagined, and less *wilful* evil of all kinds, perhaps.

AN AMERICAN INFIDEL.

The Rev. William Tennant, formerly a very eminent minister of the Gospel in New England, once took much pains to prepare a sermon to convince a celebrated Infidel of the truth of Christianity. But, in attempting to deliver this laboured discourse, he was so confused as to be compelled to stop, and close the service by prayer. This unexpected failure, in one who had so often astonished the unbeliever with the force of his eloquence, led the Infidel to reflect that Mr. T. had been, at other times, aided by a Divine power. This reflection proved the means of his conversion. Thus God accomplished by silence, what his servant wished to effect by persuasive preaching. Mr. Tennant used afterwards to say, his dumb sermon was one of the most profitable sermons that he had ever delivered.

LAYING UP TREASURES IN HEAVEN.

A minister in B——, lately delivered a lecture to a congregation on the Use of Money. The next morning, one of his hearers, on going into the house of a Christian brother, who also had heard the lecture, was accosted with, "Well, what think you of the lecture of last evening?" "Why, nothing but right," was the reply; "but, what do you think of it?" "Think!" said the first inquirer, "I think so much, that I have given away this morning, already, twelve pairs of clogs."

A few days afterwards the same friend called again, and asked, "How are you coming on now." "Oh, I have given away four score and eight pairs more," which just made up a hundred pairs. It is said that the good man has still enough and to spare, and that he really seems to think there is wisdom in the practice of "laying up treasure in Heaven."

COST OF INTOXICATING DRINK.

The money spent in the making and the use of intoxicating drinks, is enormous. That you may judge for yourselves, I will reckon up some particulars, merely telling you that the authority for them is the British Parliament, and that I have put the same in round numbers, that they may be more easily understood. Money spent in ardent spirits, thirty-two millions of gallons in a year, twenty millions of pounds; wine, eight millions of gallons, six millions of pounds; malt liquor, four hundred and twenty-three millions of gallons, about thirty-one millions of pounds; total, fifty-seven millions of pounds.

Allowing five millions of this for chemical and medical use, we have left a million in each week spent in intoxicating drink. Then there is the money spent (see Buckingham's speech) in hospitals and asylums for drunkards, each year, two millions of pounds; county aud town prisons, hulks, and transports, with machinery and police for drunkards, five millions of pounds;—houses burnt, vessels lost, goods damaged, through drunkenness, three millions of pounds: poor-rates paid to drunkards, three-fourths of the whole, six millions of pounds; time* misspent and productive labour lost, fifty millions of pounds; total, sixty-six millions of pounds.

If you like, allow fourteen millions of this as extra (though why you should I do not know), you will double your former sum.

We might as well turn into useful cultivation forty-eight million acres of the best land in our country, which is at present over-run with a stupifying bitter weed called the 'hop plant.'

We might save forty millions of imperial bushels of barley, the produce of a million acres of land from being turned into poison.

We might save one-twentieth of our population from living in places where every thing of an earthly, sensual, and devilish nature prevails and triumphs. That is, we might remove the greatest hindrance to conversion to God, from more than a million of our fellow-sinners.

We might save twenty thousand of our fellow-creatures from going yearly from the drunkards' place on earth to the drunkards' place in hell, to make room for twenty thousand more pressing forward into drunkenness from the ranks of the moderate and temperate, so as to keep up the total of six hundred thousand drunkards in the land.

We might turn a great proportion of our temperance savings into the treasury of God, with which we might carry on more vigorously his warfare against the powers of darkness. Are there any who think the above work too insignificant to be worthy of attention or support?

It is not easy to form a clear idea of so large a sum as is spent in intoxicating drinks, but the imagination may be assisted by the statement, that a hundred millions of pounds would be about twenty-five pounds for every family, of five persons, in England, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland; and if the whole were given to poor families, it would make near fifty pounds a year. The cost of drink alone to our country is more than the cost of house-rent, food, and clothing. God may well make us want, when we can make such wholesale waste.

Thanks be to God, I have done with the evil. It is between seven and eight years since I drank a glass of intoxicating drink of any kind: and I have not the least idea of ever using them either as drinks or medicines more. I hope that all our friends will aid us in banishing this tremendous evil from the face of the earth.

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* If the mechanics of London suspend their labours for a day, it is estimated that fifty thousand pounds are lost. Now, from the habit of drinking, one day is lost in each week in every town in the kingdom; then reckoning London, with one and a half million inhabitants, as one-twentieth of the whole kingdom, fifty two such weekly losses would exceed two and a half millions per year, and twenty times this would be fifty millions loss for the whole kingdom.

THE BEST BANK.

The wise of this world think that when they have secured a sum of money, and have it lodged in some creditable *bank*, receiving three and a half per cent. interest for it, they have disposed of their money well. But the wisdom of this world is foolishness. The really wise will lay up their treasure in the bank of heaven. Contrast the conduct of the two. The former puts his money in a place where it may be stolen, the latter "where thieves do not break through and steal." The former places his money in the hands of a man, or company of men, whose promise may be broken; the latter, in the hands of Him who "cannot lie." The former has, perhaps, three and a half per cent. interest; the latter will have "a hundred fold," *i. e.*, a hundred times the amount of the *principal* lodged in the banker's hands. When will men use their common sense? When will men exercise common prudence? When will men study their own interests?

A GREAT MISTAKE.

People seem to imagine, when only the lower classes of society, or the lower classes chiefly, embrace a certain doctrine, that this circumstance affords an argument against the doctrine itself. They ask, "Have any of the rulers believed on him?" They are grossly mistaken, in making this a criterion. The truth lies in the direct contrary. The fact is, that the nearer to the truth of God the doctrine is, the more opposed to it the higher classes of society will be. "Not many wise, not many noble are called." But the poor will hear and embrace the truth. "Hearken, my beloved, hath not God chosen the poor in this world rich in faith." Such was the reception which was given to Christianity at the first. "The common people heard him gladly." And as it was in the beginning, so it is now, and ever shall be. "They shall all know the Lord, *from the least* even *to the greatest*." This is the progression of the truth. Therefore, if we are disposed to test a doctrine by the reception it meets with in the world, we must remember this rule, truth generally is welcomed by the poor, and rejected by the rich. Blessed are ye poor! Woe unto you that are rich!

ST. CHRYSOSTOM ON AFFECTION TO THE POOR.

If a poor man asks a morsel of bread of us, we repel him, revile him, and call him robber: yet were this true, had the most pressing hunger forced him to steal, would he not be more worthy of compassion? Should you not rather pity the necessity, which constrained him, against inclination, to commit that theft; and spare your reproaches, which are more an argument of your cruelty than of the poor man's iniquity? Are not these unhappy creatures who are unable to soften the inflexibility of your temper, and to procure access to you, or who, if they do, are sure to find both your hearts and ears closed against them and all their prayers,—are not these unhappy wretches compelled, with great reluctancy, to have recourse to some deceit in order to impose upon your inhumanity, and extort that violently from your rigour, which they could not obtain from your mercy? If the poor person who addresses himself to you, demanded your purse, or had any design upon your gold, you might with reason suspect him. But when he asks only for a little bread, what have you to reproach him with? Why do you examine things so cruelly that you may find means to accuse him of idleness? Alas! if any are to be charged with this vice, let us accuse ourselves. When you implore God to forgive your sins, then it would become you to impute this particular one to yourself, rather than to this wretched beggar, who is not so justly chargeable with it. Does God, however, treat you with such rigour? Does he say to you, Begone, do not trouble me, get out of the church; this you constantly frequent, and hear my word in it; but no sooner are you out of it, than you prefer your interest to my law. Here you appear before me with an humbled heart, dejected eyes, and prostrate body, and no sooner is your prayer concluded, than the footsteps of your cruelty and barbarity are everywhere visible. Begone out of my presence, and never more presume to enter into my church. Is it not true that we should merit these reproaches? Yet God treats us in no such language, he is gentle and patient, he bestows more upon us than we ask of him. Let us think of this, my brethren, and relieve the poor in their necessity. If they are troublesome, let us not speak harshly to them; let us not examine things rigorously; for we have reason to wish, that God would not make the same severe inquiry into our conduct, but prevent us with his tenderness and lenity. Were he to treat us rigorously, who would be saved? Let us not, therefore, by our severity towards others, force him to deal rigidly with us. Let us pardon others, though they should appear unworthy of forgiveness, that by this means we may dispose God to treat us with the same measure, and to forgive us those faults, which would never merit his indulgence.

How compassionate and charitable soever we may be, we have still need that God should be more so with respect to us. What an extravagancy would it be then to show so much cruelty to our brethren, when his mercy is so necessary to us? Let us no longer, therefore, speak against our own interest; whether the poor man be idle or not, it is not our business to inquire; if he be, let us not refuse him our charity. The greatest part of our calamities, nay, I may boldly say all of them, proceed from idleness. God, however, does not punish us; he gives us opportunity, by repentance, to return both to him and to ourselves; he cherishes, instructs, and corrects us: he gives us every thing, that we may take example from his goodness, and imitate him as our pattern. Let us not, therefore, be hard-hearted, but believe that by all offices of kindness we oblige ourselves more than others. We bestow a little money, and by it acquire a glory, the greatness whereof is incomprehensible. For our bodies, which will one day be resumed by us, will be incorruptible, we shall reign with Jesus Christ, and be partakers of his glory; the unboundedness of which is now inconceivable, but will then clearly appear to us. Some imperfect apprehension, however, we may have at present of its inestimable value, by comparing it with the highest advantages that we possess. For, suppose a man, equally oppressed with want and old age, were promised on a sudden to be made young, vigorous, and master of the world: what would he not do or suffer after such a promise? Yet what is this promise in comparison of those which Jesus Christ has made to us? What proportion is there between age and youth, mortality and immortality, between poverty and an earthly kingdom, between this life and the glory of another? To compare these things together, is to compare dreams with realities, war with peace, an excellent diamond with a little dirt.—There is nothing on earth to which we can compare the future glory of our bodies; the brightest ray of the sun is a weak representation of their splendour. Should we not, therefore, be lavish of our wealth, and expose even life itself, to procure so considerable an advantage? We should think ourselves very happy, if a great prince should honour us with his looks, his conversation, and his table; yet, that we may have access to the king of kings, be admitted to the fruition of his ineffable glory, and shine with brightness, equal to that of angels, we cannot, without reluctancy, part with a small share of our riches, when we should sacrifice our lives with joy to obtain so infinite a benefit. We exhaust our coffers in the purchase of an employment, which is the occasion often of our committing a thousand acts of injustice; and when heaven is to be purchased, that glorious kingdom, wherein we shall have no successor, which we shall possess peaceably, entirely, and without envy, we lay out our money with regret. Do you not, sometimes, make this reflection with yourselves, viz.:—That since what we discern of heaven is so beautiful, that which remains invisible must be infinitely more so. If your eyes are too weak to penetrate thus far, contemplate it spiritually: raise yourself above this visible heaven, and ascend into the heaven of heavens, to that light which is inaccessible, and infuses a holy dread into the soul, to the multitude of angels, and crowd of blessed spirits. From thence look down upon the kingdoms here below, observe a prince in the highest splendour of his glory, encompassed with men, set off with all the richness of dress, and drawn in chariots glittering with precious stones. Observe him in himself so adorned with majesty and every thing that may dazzle the eyes of the beholders, that no farther notice is taken of all the magnificence about him; so much is it effaced, by that which appears in his own person, in his purple, his diadem, in all the marks of his royalty, and above all, in that noble air which distinguishes him from all others. Having observed all this, ascend again immediately into the highest heaven, then compare what you have seen on earth with the glory of Jesus Christ, when he shall come to judge the world. The heavens will be all opened, and from thence the only Son of the living God will descend with so much majesty, as shall strike terror into the very angels themselves. The earth will open with a mighty noise, and all mankind will rise out of their graves to appear before their judge. The sun and moon shall be eclipsed by the light of the Lord. Here, I am unable to restrain my tears, when I consider what blessings we shall forfeit by our own fault, what a felicity we shall deprive ourselves of, unless we endeavour to perform some heroic action. Let them no more talk of hell, the loss of this glory to me is worse than a thousand hells, and the privation of this peace, more insupportable than all the torments of the other. Yet all our thoughts and desires are biassed towards the world, and we discover not the devil's artifice, who deludes us, and gives us something inconsiderable, that he may snatch from us that which is of infinite value; who offers us a little dirt in exchange for gold, and promises us the earth that he may exclude us from heaven. For how shall we one day excuse ourselves to God? Shall we say that we were unacquainted with the frailty of this life, when the daily passages of it represent to us nothing else, and publish everywhere, like a sounding trumpet, how miserable every thing is under the sun, how unworthy of us every thing is in it, and how ensnaring? How shall we excuse ourselves, for having pursued with so much passion after that, which in itself is so mean and uncertain, and for having let slip such excellent and sure advantages? What answer shall we give, when we shall be reproached with our love of gold, and the ignominious passion that has made us slaves to it? For I appeal here to all those who have been weaned from this affection, and ask them, whether wealth be not a very formidable tyrant. If you would know what this servitude is, and what liberty they enjoy, who do not love it; break all the fetters that avarice loads you with, and instead of riches, keep that by you, which is beyond comparison dearer and more precious, I mean charity. Charity gives you access to God; riches confound you in his presence, and put you under the power of the devil. Why then do you arm your enemy against you? Why, on the contrary, do you not arm yourself against him? Convert the embellishments of your houses into so many ornaments of your soul; transform the wealth of your coffers into that, which may enrich the immortal part of you. Let heaven, hereafter, be the place to securey our store in; there lay it up with care. Are we not more to be considered than our houses, and is not our heart more precious than our treasures? Why, then, do we neglect ourselves, that we may be solicitous about trifles, which we can scarce preserve during this life, so far are we from being able to carry them with us, when we die? How foolish would it be to expose ourselves to poverty in this world and the other, when we might be rich in both? Lodge, therefore, your wealth in heaven, and convey it thither by the poor man's hands; thus you will enrich your own soul. Death will not then have the power to force it from you, and when you die, you will go rich into the other world. Such was the treasure that Tabitha was mistress of; she was celebrated, not for magnificent houses, splendid furniture, or diamonds of great value, but for the great number of widows that she had clothed, the tears that they shed, and the miraculous resurrection which they obtained for her by their prayers. Such treasures as these let us provide, such houses let us build for ourselves; and in the raising these divine edifices God will be assisting to us, and we to him, in his design of saving us. It is owing to his infinite wisdom and favourable intentions towards us, that there are any poor in the world. He then laid, as it were, the foundations of that spiritual fabric I am speaking of; and you work on this foundation, when you give alms to the poor, and relieve them in their want; you then build up the temple of God. If we desire glory even in this world, can any greater be aspired to, than that of being co-operators with God? If still you do not comprehend the honour it is to be the guardians of the poor, learn by what I am going to say to you. Should God enable you to support the falling heavens, would you not believe, that you had received a more than human measure of grace? Yet he has gone beyond this, by giving you means wherewithal, to support what is dearer to him than heaven. Among all created beings, there are none more esteemed by God, than man; for him he hath made heaven and earth, and is more pleased to dwell in him, than in heaven itself. 'Tis strange that, knowing as we do, these truths, we should yet neglect the living temples of the Lord, that we should leave them in ruins, and consider only, how to raise magnificent houses for ourselves. By this misconduct, we make ourselves poorer than the poor themselves; we build such edifices as cannot follow us, and abandon those which, one day, will be admitted into heaven, with us. For the bodies of the poor, which are now despised by you, will rise again after their dissolution; God will produce them at the day of judgment, in the presence of all mankind, and will publicly commend those, whose compassion shall have kept up these falling edifices, and prevented their being completely ruined by hunger, nakedness, and cold. These commendations are proposed to you, but without affecting you. While Jesus Christ, in the person of the poor, has not a place to lay his head in, and wanders up and down like a stranger, pressed with the extremities of hunger and thirst; you are employed in building of baths, country-seats, and an infinite number of apartments, with passages from one chamber to another, without allowing one little corner for the reception of Jesus Christ. May not this, without aggravating things, be called extravagancy and folly?

We account the Scriptures of God to be the most sublime philosophy. —*Isaac Newton.*

And so they are. Great and sublime as are the views which astronomy opens to the mind, they are low and little compared to those views which are opened to us by revelation. Even astronomy itself owes the principal part of its interest and sublimity to its connection with those views of the Divine character and providence unfolded by the Sacred Oracles. But what are all the glories presented to the mind by the starry heavens, compared with those views of the birth of the universe,—the infinite and ever-watchful providence of God, superintending, pervading, and controlling all things, and directing all to the present and eternal welfare of his creatures,—the tender regard of God for the souls of men,—the affecting and overwhelming display of his goodness in the plan of redemption, and the solemn and boundless prospects which it opens into the eternal future? The philosophy of revelation is a world of glories. An age would not be sufficient to describe its wonders; eternity itself will be needed to enable us rightly to understand its worth and excellence.

On one occasion Dr. Halley, a noted philosopher in his way, when in company with Sir Isaac Newton, was speaking very disrespectfully of religion, and throwing out some very indecent reflections on Christianity. Sir Isaac knowing well enough that the Doctor did not understand what he was talking about, replied, "Dr. Halley, when you speak about astronomy, or other parts of the mathematics, you speak well; because they are subjects which you have studied, and well understand; but you should not talk of Christianity, for you have not studied it.—I have, and I am certain you know nothing of the matter."

ST. GREGORY OF NYSSA, (A.D. 380,) ON THE PRIDE OF YOUTH.

He that looks to himself, and not to the things that are about him, will see little reason to be proud: for what is man? Say the best of him, and that which may add the greatest honour and veneration to him, that he is born of nobles, and yet he that adorns his descent, and speaks highliest of the splendour and nobility of his house, does but derive his pedigree from the dust. And dost thou not blush, thou statue of earth, who art shortly to be crumbled into dust, who bubble-like, containest within thee a short-lived humour; dost thou not blush to swell with pride and arrogance, and to have thy mind stuffed with vain idle thoughts? Thou pridest thyself in thy juvenile age, and flatterest thyself in the flower, the beauty and sprightliness of thy youth, that thy hands are ready for action, and thy feet apt to dance in nimble measures; that thy locks are waved by the wanton motions of the wind, and a soft down overgrows thy cheeks, that thy purple robes put the very roses to the blush, and thy silken vestures are variegated with rich embroidery of battles, huntings, or pieces of ancient history; or brought down to the feet, artificially set off with black, and curiously made fast with strings and buttons. These are the things thou lookest at, without any regard to thyself. But let me a little, as in a glass, show thee thy own face, who and what thou art: hast thou not seen in a public charnel-house the unveiled mysteries of human nature; bones rudely thrown upon heaps; naked skulls with hollow eye-holes, yielding a dreadful and deformed spectacle? Hast thou not beheld their grinning mouths, and ghastly looks, and the rest of their members carelessly dispersed and scattered? If thou hast beheld such sights as those, in them thou hast seen thyself. Where then will be the signs of thy present beauty, that good complexion that adorns thy cheeks, and the colour of thy lips, that frightful majesty, and supercilious loftiness that once resided in thine eyes, or thy nose that once beautifully graced thy cheeks? Where are thy locks that were wont to reach thy shoulders, the curls that used to adorn thy temples? What are become of those arms that used to draw the bow, those legs that used to bestride thy horses? Where is the purple, the silken garments, the long robe, the belt, the spurs, the horse, the race, the noise and prancings; and all the rest of those things that now add fuel to thy pride? Tell me, where then will those things be, upon the account whereof thou dost now so much boast and bear up thyself? Was there ever any dream so fond and inconstant, any thing more fantastic that ever appeared to a man asleep? What shadow was ever so thin, so incapable of being grasped within the hollow of the hand, as this dream of youth, which at once appears, and immediately vanishes away.

CHRISTIANITY.

Christianity is the manifestation and inculcation of universal love. The great teaching of Christianity is, that we must recognise and respect human nature in all its forms, in the poorest, most ignorant, most fallen. We must look beneath 'the flesh,' to 'the spirit.' The spiritual principle in man is what entitles him to our brotherly regard. To be just to this, is the great injunction of our religion. To overlook this, on account of condition or colour, is to violate the great Christian law. We have reason to think that it is one design of God, in appointing the vast diversities of human condition, to put to the test, and to bring out most distinctly the principle of spiritual love. It is wisely ordered that human nature is not set before us in a few forms of beauty, magnificence, and outward glory. To be dazzled and attracted by these, would be no sign of reverence for what is interior and spiritual in human nature. To lead us to discern and love this, we are brought into connection with fellow-creatures whose outward circumstances are repulsive. To recognise our own spiritual nature and God's image in these humble forms, to recognise as brethren those who want all outward distinctions, is the chief way in which we are to manifest the spirit of Him who came to raise the fallen and to save the lost.

"He who cannot see a brother, or a child of God, a man possessing all the rights of humanity, under a skin darker than his own, wants the vision of a Christian. He worships the outward. The spirit is not yet revealed to him. To look unmoved on the degradation and wrongs of a fellow-creature, because burned by a fiercer sun, proves us strangers to justice and love, in those universal forms which characterise Christianity. The greatest of all distinctions, the only enduring one, is moral goodness, virtue, religion. Outward distinctions cannot add to the dignity of this. The wealth of worlds is 'not sufficient for a burnt-offering' on its altar. A being capable of this, is invested by God with solemn claims on his fellow-creatures. To exclude millions of such beings from our sympathy, because of outward disadvantages, proves, that in whatever else we surpass them, we are not their superiors in Christian virtue.

"The spirit of Christianity, I have said, is distinguished by universality. It is universal justice. It respects all the rights of all beings. It suffers no being, however obscure, to be wronged, without condemning the wrong-doer. Impartial, uncompromising, fearless, it screens no favourites, is dazzled by no power, spreads its shield over the weakest, summons the mightiest to its bar, and speaks to the conscience in tones under which the mightiest have quailed. It is also universal love, comprehending those that are near and those that are far off, the high and the low, the rich and the poor, descending to the fallen, and especially binding itself to those in whom human nature is trampled under foot."

W. E. C.

CAUSES OF LUKEWARMNESS.

One cause of lukewarmness is the belief that lukewarmness cannot be avoided. There are some, perhaps a great many, who believe that it is impossible for people to retain the same degree of holy fervour which they feel when first converted to God. They believe that all who are converted to God lose their first love sooner or later, and that no one can help losing it. They have lost their first love themselves; they have seen that many others have done the same; and they expect it to be thus with all. They accordingly preach this doctrine to young converts, and many young converts receive it, and are led to expect a state of lukewarmness accordingly. This doctrine was preached to me while I was a young convert, and I well recollect what distress and anguish it produced in me. When young converts believe this doctrine, what can be more natural than for them to fall into a state of lukewarmness. If they believed lukewarmness to be avoidable, they would try to avoid it; and when they found it creeping upon them, they would be alarmed, and driven to a more diligent use of the means by which it might be prevented. But when they regard it as a thing that cannot be avoided, they begin to look for it, and when it comes, they carelessly encourage it, and allow themselves to fall under its power without resistance. I believe that multitudes become the victims of lukewarmness in this way.—And multitudes of those who become lukewarm, are kept in their lukewarmness by a similar notion. They imagine, that to be always alive to God is a thing impossible, and that to be permanently delivered from lukewarmness is what no man has any right to expect.

Yet this notion is altogether false. It is not impossible for persons to avoid lukewarmness. There is no necessity whatever for young converts to lose their fervour. It is possible, on the contrary, to increase in holy zeal, and to grow in piety and enjoyment all our life through. There is not a passage in the whole book of God to warrant the notion that it is impossible to avoid lukewarmness. There is a kind of overwhelming pleasurable excitement which many experience when they are first converted to God, that it may not be possible to retain in all its fulness; but the strength and fervour of that love to God and love to man which give rise to that excitement, may be retained. The mind may become more stayed and calm, but not less zealous and active in the cause of God. And with respect to those who have fallen into a state of lukewarmness, there is no necessity for them to remain in their lukewarmness another week. Lukewarmness is a sin; and to suppose it impossible to avoid sin, is absolute folly. The lukewarm are under the displeasure of God, and to suppose it impossible to avoid lukewarmness, is to suppose it impossible for us to remain in the favour of God. The lukewarm are unfit for heaven, and to suppose it impossible to avoid lukewarmness, is to suppose it impossible to live in a state of preparation for heaven. The lukewarm are most offensive to God; and to suppose it impossible for Christians to avoid being more offensive to God than downright profligates and unbelievers, is downright folly. Every thing that is offensive to God may be avoided; and every thing that God has commanded may be done. It is impossible that God should require more of us than we are able to do: it is impossible that he should be displeased with us for not doing that which we had not the power to do. It is not impossible to avoid lukewarmness. The new-born soul may retain its fervour of holy affection to the end of life. Nay more: its love and zeal may continually increase. No limits can be placed to the improvement of the soul. Instead of falling back into a state of lukewarmness, it may go forward, approaching nearer and nearer to the perfection and glory of God for ever and ever. This is made our duty in fact. We are commanded to go on to perfection,—to grow in grace,—to grow up into Christ our head in all things,—and the Apostle prays that we may be filled with all the fulness of God. We may grow wiser, and holier, and happier every year we live.

We have read of persons, and we have met with persons, who have gone thus regularly forward in religion. This, we believe, was the case in a great measure with John Fletcher and John Wesley; and this has been the case with thousands more. And others, who have for a time declined in religion, have speedily recovered their first love, and ever after gone on their way rejoicing. And what they have done, we may do. I do not say that we can secure a constant increase of passionate feeling or excitement; but that we may experience a constant increase of love to God and man, and of spirituality and heavenliness of soul, is as true as the Gospel itself.

And no one can say how far the souls of God's people may experience a constant increase even of religious feeling. Some of God's people appear to have experienced a very copious, and even a regular flow of pleasurable emotions. And I see no reason why the increase of pleasurable feelings should not generally keep pace with the increase of holy affections.

The first thing therefore to be done, if we would not fall into a state of lukewarmness, is to cast away the notion that a state of lukewarmness cannot be avoided. We must learn not to look for lukewarmness, and if we should find it coming upon us, we must bestir ourselves, and seek for the restoration and for an increase of our spiritual life.

2. Neglect to acquire an increase of religious knowledge is another frequent cause of lukewarmness. Holy affections are like fires; if we would not have them to go out, we must feed them from time to time with fresh fuel. The lamp must be fed with oil, if we would have it to continue to burn. And if we would have the fire of holy zeal to be kept burning within us, we must feed it with heavenly truth. Knowledge is the fuel of love. The more we know of God, the more we are likely to love him; and the less we know of him, and the less we think of him, the more likely is our love towards him to decline. And so with all other holy affections; they are all fed with heavenly truth, and they all famish if truth be withheld. The tree that is planted in the unwatered desert, dies, or if it lives, it does not thrive; its life is a life of languishing: but a tree planted by the rivers of water, flourishes pleasantly, and bringeth forth its fruit in its season. As water is to the tree, as fuel is to the fire, and as food is to the body, so is a knowledge of truth to the soul. If we would have the soul to retain its spiritual life and vigour, it must have fresh supplies of heavenly knowledge continually. And many

fall into a state of lukewarmness in consequence of not seeking those supplies of food for their souls. At first a little knowledge excites and warms their souls; but when that little knowledge becomes common, it loses its power thus to excite and warm. The first discovery of any thing affects us powerfully; but after a thing has become familiar, its power to affect us grows less. If the soul is to be kept alive, we must be perpetually making further discoveries. So with respect to God and our eternal interests. When our spiritual eyes are first opened, and when first the things of God present themselves to our souls, we are at times excited beyond measure. Our souls can scarcely contain their emotions. The effect is so powerful upon some minds, as to overwhelm reason, and produce a temporary madness. But this excitement invariably declines; that is, our first discoveries lose their power thus to excite us when they become familiar. Nothing can prevent them from thus losing their power to excite; and to try to experience continually the same fervour and power of feeling, as often as we think of those discoveries, while we are neglecting to make further discoveries, will be in vain. If the feeling and fervour are to continue, there must be fresh and fuller discoveries of God and of his truth. Before the first truths have lost their power, we must lay hold of other truths, or fresh and fuller views of truths already discovered. Before the first fuel is consumed, we must add fresh fuel, if we would have the fire to retain its heat. An increase of spiritual knowledge must be the object of our daily pursuit. We must not be content with understanding a little of divine truth, we must go on to perfection, seeking to understand every thing that God has been pleased to reveal. We should make the Scriptures our daily companion; we should listen to the truth preached by Christ's servants with eager attention; we should read useful religious books, and use diligently all the means with which providence may favour us, that the word of Christ may dwell in us richly, in all wisdom, and that we may be able to comprehend the whole system of the truth as it is in Jesus.

3. Another cause of lukewarmness, in some cases, is the unguarded and imprudent pursuit of knowledge. There is a danger of giving ourselves to the pursuit of wrong kinds of knowledge; and there is a danger of seeking knowledge for wrong ends, and in a wrong way. There is a danger of persons giving themselves to the pursuit of wrong kinds of knowledge. All kinds of knowledge are not equally useful, nor is the same kind of useful knowledge equally useful to all persons. There are some kinds of knowledge which it would be sinful for me to pursue, because while they are of comparatively little use to any, they would be of no use whatever to me. There are other kinds of knowledge of great importance to persons up to a certain point; but of no use beyond that point. I consider a person to be pursuing wrong kinds of knowledge, when he is pursuing such kinds of knowledge as are not calculated to prove of any real service to him, or when he seeks for larger stores of certain kinds of knowledge than are likely to be of any service. There are numerous branches of science which are of no use whatever to most persons, such as a knowledge of paintings, music, &c. and there are numerous other branches of science, that it may be necessary to understand to a certain point, and yet not at all needful to understand them beyond that point; such as the science of mathematics and history, strange languages, and natural philosophy. But when a person begins to study, he is in danger of allowing himself to be governed by inclination, instead of governing himself by a regard to the will of God. Knowledge gives fame and influence, and there is danger lest people should seek after knowledge with a view to become something in the estimation of men. Again, a man cannot pursue a study long and regularly, without getting a strong liking for the study, and then he is in danger of pursuing the study for the sake of the pleasure which he finds in it. Then there is a danger, in these cases, that knowledge will be pursued too eagerly and too far, and that the affection for knowledge will undermine the affection for religion, and the pursuit of a favourite study take the place of attention to religious duties,

and so lukewarmness be the result.

Then there is a danger lest we should err even in the pursuit of religious knowledge. There is a danger lest we should aim at wrong ends in our pursuit of religious knowledge. There is a danger lest, instead of seeking only to please God and increase in our piety and usefulness, we should aim at office, or gain, or at the honour which cometh from men. There is danger also lest we should pursue a wrong course in our studies. There is a danger lest we should give too much attention to unimportant controversies about religion. There are thousands of matters which are generally regarded as religious matters, which have no more relation to the religion of Christ, than the various questions about the inhabitants of the moon. Thousands of controversies have been raised about religion, which are of no importance whatever. Some give a great part of their time to the study of these controversies, and the result of their folly is, that they lose their first love, and fall into a state of complete lukewarmness.

If a follower of Christ would pursue knowledge without injury to his soul, he should be careful, 1. To aim at nothing in his studies, but the glory of God, the salvation of his soul, and the welfare of his fellow men. 2. He should be careful to ascertain what kinds and measures of knowledge are best calculated to promote those ends. 3. He should labour, first, for a clear, correct, and comprehensive knowledge of the great practical principles of Christian truth and duty as laid down in the New Testament. 4. He should ask the advice of such as are more experienced than himself, and especially of such as, in addition to their better understanding and experience, are manifestly holy, zealous, and useful men. 5. He should especially ask counsel of God, by daily fervent prayer. 6. He should consider the shortness and uncertainty of life, and the greatness and importance of that work which God has placed him in the world to do, and measure the worth and importance of every thing by its fitness to assist him in accomplishing the great end of his being. Follow these directions, and you will not be in much danger of erring in your pursuit of knowledge. Follow these directions, and your pursuit of knowledge, instead of causing lukewarmness, will tend to increase the fervour of your piety, as well as to increase your ability to promote the spiritual welfare of your fellow-men.

4. Another cause of lukewarmness is the indulgence of the flesh. The Gospel requires self-denial. Temperance is inculcated by it over and over again. We are exhorted not to make provision for the flesh to gratify its desires, but to mortify the flesh, and keep the body in subjection. We are commanded, whether we eat, or drink, or whatever we do, to do all to the glory of God. All deviations from this rule tend to injure the soul. All kinds of intemperance, all needless, luxurious gratifications of the flesh, tend to lessen the fervour of our affection towards God and eternal things. To pamper the flesh, is to starve the soul; and to deny the flesh of needless indulgences, and to keep it in subjection, tends to give new strength and fervour to all its holy affections. All those things which tend to cause pleasurable excitement in the mind, through the medium of the bodily organs, such as intoxicating drinks and drugs, and all kinds of sentimental, exciting productions in literature, such as novels and dramatic pieces, have, I am persuaded, a direct tendency to lower the state of holy feeling in the minds of God's people. The love of music and pictures, of dress and ornaments, as well as of ease and splendour, all tend directly to undermine religion in the soul, and to rob men of their spiritual health and energies.

The same remark is applicable to all exciting games and sports; to shows, theatrical exhibitions, horse races, and the whole catalogue of similar things. In just such proportion as men allow themselves to take pleasure in them, will they be unable to find pleasure in religion: in just such proportion as men allow themselves to be excited with these things, will they cease to be excited by spiritual objects: in just such proportion they will become lukewarm. John Wesley, in his Sermon on Self-denial, lays down this principle, that it is always owing to the want either of self-denial, or taking up his cross, that any man does not thoroughly follow Christ. "A man," says he, "received the heavenly gift, he tasted of the powers of the world to come; he saw 'the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ;' the peace which passeth all understanding ruled his heart and mind, and the love of God was shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost which was given unto him;—yet he is now weak as another man; he again relishes the things of earth, and has more taste for the things which are seen than for those which are not seen. His love is waxed cold, and the peace of God no longer rules in his heart. And no marvel; he has made shipwreck of faith, for want of self-denial, and taking up the cross daily." He says again, "We may learn from hence, the real cause why not only many particular persons, but even bodies of men, who were once burning and shining lights, have now lost both their light and heat: if they did not hate and oppose, they at least lightly esteemed this precious Gospel doctrine. If they did not boldly say, 'we trample all self-denial under foot, we devote it to destruction,' yet they neither valued it according to its high importance, nor took any pains in practising it."

And Wesley was right in these his statements. A disposition to indulge ourselves; to consult for our own pleasure, instead of asking in all things what will most please God, and best promote the welfare of our fellow-men, is as ruinous to the health and life of the soul, as the plague is to the health and life of the body.

If, therefore, we would avoid lukewarmness,—if we would perserve our religious feelings unblunted,—if we would have our souls in a healthy, lively state towards God and goodness, we must practise the art of self-denial—we must make duty alone our care, and leave it to God to deal out to us pleasure according to his will. The more eager men are to obtain pleasure, the more likely they are to bring their souls into a low and lukewarm state. Let us therefore look after duty only, and leave it to God to impart such pleasures to us as shall to him seem best.

5. Another frequent cause of lukewarmness is worldly prosperity. The Scriptures abound with intimations of the beneficial tendency of affliction and adversity, and of the danger of riches and prosperity. While the Psalmist tells us that it was good that he had been afflicted, he tells us of others, who because they had no changes, sought not after God. Moses saw the danger to which prosperity would expose the people of Israel, and warned them against it. "The Lord thy God bringeth thee into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of the valleys and hills; a land of wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig trees, and pomegranates; a land of oil olive, and honey; a land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness, wherein thou shalt not lack any thing; a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills thou shalt dig brass. Beware, lest when thou hast eaten and art full, and hast built goodly houses, and dwelt therein: and when thy herds and thy flocks multiply, and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied, and all that thou hast is multiplied,—beware lest then thy heart be lifted up, and thou forget the Lord thy God, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage." Deut. viii. 7, and vi. 11, 12, &c. &c. God positively foretold that prosperity and self-indulgence would lead them into apostacy. "For when I shall have brought them into the land which I sware unto their fathers, that floweth with milk and honey, and they shall have eaten and filled themselves, and waxen fat; then will they turn unto other gods, and serve them, and provoke me, and break my covenant." Deut. xxxi. 20. In anticipation of this degeneracy, brought on by their prosperity and self-indulgence, God ordered a prophetic song to be written and recorded, that it might testify against them in their apostacy, in which there is found the following passage, "But Jeshurun waxed fat, and kicked; thou art waxen fat, thou art grown thick, thou art covered with fatness; then he forsook God, and lightly esteemed the rock of his salvation." Deut. xxxii. 15.

Hosea connects the depravity of his times with the preceding prosperity and wealth of the people. "According to their pasture, so were they filled; they were filled, and their heart was exalted; therefore have they forgotten me." xiii. 6. It was a sense of this truth that led Agur to pray, "Give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me: lest I be full, and deny thee, and say, Who is the Lord? or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God in vain." Prov. xxx. 8, 9. Under the light of the Gospel, the danger of poverty is greatly lessened; but wealth and prosperity appear to be as dangerous as ever. Hence the Redeemer said, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal;" and he gives this reason for the command; "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." Matt. vi. That is; if you lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, your affections will cling to earth; but if you lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, your affections will be in heaven. If you lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, your affection for God and heaven will decline: if you lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, by employing your wealth in doing good, your affection for earth will abate, and your love to God, to man, and to all things spiritual, will abound. In accordance with this passage, the Redeemer teaches us, in the parable of the sower, that the cares, the riches, and the pleasures of this life, are among the things which choke the springing grain of grace, and prevent it from bringing forth fruit to perfection. "He that received the seed among the thorns, is he that heareth the word; and the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful." Matt. xiii. 22. The Redeemer said to his disciples, on another occasion, "Verily I say unto you, that a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven. It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven." Matt. xix. 23, 24. When a certain rich young man asked the Saviour what he should do that he might have eternal life, the Saviour directed him, if he would be perfect, to sell his property, and give it to the poor, and to follow him. The Saviour saw the young man's danger, and wished him at once to take effectual measures to secure himself: but the young man was already too far ensnared and enthralled by his deceitful treasures, and though not far from the kingdom, he still fell short, and became the mournful victim of his wealth. The Apostle Paul tells us, that "They that will be rich,—that cherish the desire for more than food and raiment,—fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil." He also directs those who are rich, if they would not be ruined by their wealth, not to be high-minded, or to trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God,—to do good with their riches, to be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate, laying up in store a good foundation for the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life. 1. Tim. vi. 8—19. All those passages of Scripture, and many others which might be quoted, show that there is a tendency in riches and prosperity to cool our love to God and to religion, and to bring us into a state of lukewarmness and apostacy.

And it is worthy of observation, that in many of the cases of apostacy or declension in religion recorded in the Sacred Scriptures, worldly prosperity appears to have been the principal cause, or the prevailing temptation. It was principally in the days of his prosperity that David swerved so seriously from duty. It was in his prosperity that Solomon declined in piety, and fell into lukewarmness and apostacy. It was generally in their prosperity that the children of Israel forgot God, and lightly esteemed the rock of their salvation. In their adversity they sought the Lord again, and repented of their evil ways; but prosperity and ease still succeeded, time after time, in bringing them into rebellion again. It is remarkable that the church of Laodicea,—the only one in the seven that was charged with being lukewarm,—is represented as abounding in worldly prosperity; as saying, "I am rich, and increased in goods, and have need of nothing." It is also worthy of remark, that the church of Smyrna, which appears to have been the most pure, and zealous, and faithful of the seven Asiatic churches, is spoken of as being in adversity and poverty. "I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty; but thou art rich. Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried, and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." Rev. ii. 9, 10. The wealthy church was spiritually poor, the poor and persecuted church was spiritually rich.

The times of adversity were the best times for the ancient churches generally. When the churches were poor, and persecuted, they were all alive, full of the Holy Ghost, and abundantly prosperous: souls were saved and added to the church daily. But when the churches were tried with ease and plenty, the members and ministers declined in purity and zeal, and became half-hearted, indolent, and lukewarm. And this is in accordance with the history of Christian churches of later times. The ancient Puritans, the Independents, and the Quakers, were most alive to God, and most zealous in his cause, when they were poor and persecuted. When they began to be favoured with ease and prosperity, their zeal and love declined. No professors of religion were more zealous and laborious in the cause of God,—none were more bold in reproving sin, or more patient in enduring sufferings for Christ's sake, while they were persecuted and poor, than the Quakers; and yet, since they became wealthy, their influence has almost ceased to be felt. The Methodists were more zealous when they were poor and persecuted; the influx of wealth into the societies has had a fearful influence upon the purity and zeal both of the preachers and members. And how many instances of individuals have we known ourselves, who, when they were in low circumstances, and obliged to labour hard for their bread, were zealous, active, and heavenly; but who, after they entered into trade, or began a shop, and began to be tried with prosperity, gradually lost their simplicity and fervour, and sank down into a careless and earthly condition.

John Wesley has spoken very plainly and strongly on the mischievous influence of riches on the soul, and very few ever had better opportunities of understanding the subject than he. In his sermon on Rom. ix. 33; speaking of the declension which he had witnessed in the purity and zeal of the Methodist preachers and societies, and of the means by which that declension had been occasioned, he speaks as follows:—"But of all temptations, none so struck at the whole work of God as the deceitfulness of riches; a thousand melancholy proofs of which I have seen within these last fifty years. Deceitful are they indeed! For who will believe that they do him the least harm? And yet I have not known threescore rich persons, perhaps not half the number, during threescore years, who, as far as I can judge, were not less holy than they would have been, had they been poor. By riches I mean, not thousands of pounds, but any more than will procure the conveniences of life. Thus, I account him a rich man, who has food and raiment for himself and family, without running into debt, and something over. And how few are there in these circumstances who are not hurt, if not destroyed, thereby! Yet who takes warning? Who seriously regards that awful declaration of the Apostle, Even they that desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into divers foolish and hurtful desires, which drown men in destruction and perdition? How many sad instances have we seen of this in London, in Bristol, in Newcastle; in all the large trading towns throughout the kingdom, where God has lately caused his power to be known! See how many of these, who were once simple of heart, desiring nothing but God, are now gratifying 'the desire of the flesh;' studying to please their senses, particularly their taste?

How many of them are now indulging 'the desire of the eye?' using every means which is in their power, to enlarge the pleasures of their imagination, seeking happiness in pretty or elegant apparel, or furniture, or in new clothes, or books, or in pictures or gardens? Others *gain all they can*, honestly and conscientiously. They *save all they can*, by cutting of all needless expense; by adding frugality to diligence. And so far all is right. This is the duty of every one that fears God. But they do not *give all they can*, without which they must needs grow more and more earthly-minded. Their affections will cleave to the dust more and more; and they will have less and less communion with God. Is not this *your* case? Do not *you* lay up, or at least desire and endeavour to 'lay up treasure on earth?' Are you not, then, more and more alive to the world, and, consequently, more and more dead to God? It cannot be otherwise. That *must* follow, unless you give all you can, as well as gain and save all you can. There is no other way under heaven to prevent your money from sinking you lower than the grave."

Again, in his sermon on Jer. viii, 22, he says, "Why is not the spiritual health of the people called Methodists recovered? Why has Christianity done so little good among us,—among the Methodists? Plainly, because we have forgot, or at least not duly attended to these solemn words of our Lord, 'If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.' But why is self-denial in general so little practised at present among the Methodists? Why is so exceedingly little of it to be found even in the oldest and largest societies? The more I observe and consider things, the more clearly it appears what is the cause of this in London, in Bristol, in Birmingham, in Manchester, in Leeds, in Dublin, in Cork. The Methodists grow more and more self-indulgent, because they *grow rich*. Although many of them are still deplorably poor; yet many others, in the space of twenty, thirty, or forty years, are twenty, thirty, yea a hundred times richer than they were when they first entered the society. And it is an observation which admits of few exceptions, that nine in ten of these decrease in grace, in the same proportion as they increase in wealth. Indeed, according to the natural tendency of riches, we cannot expect it to be otherwise."

Such are the words of John Wesley on this subject. His works abound with such sentiments, and scripture and experience unite together to prove his sentiments on this subject true. If, then, we would not become lukewarm, we must be on our guard against the influence of prosperity. We must not be covetous of prosperity. Having food and raiment, we must be therewith content. We must learn to look on wealth as dangerous, as exceedingly dangerous. We must form our estimate of riches according to the teaching of the true and faithful witness; and not according to the judgment of the world. We must regard the acquisition and possession of wealth as a serious and tremendous trial, rather than as a cause of joy and exultation. If prosperity come upon us, we must be the more careful that we become not self-indulgent. We must watch the flesh and the fancy with increasing care, and restrain them with increasing strictness and severity. We must be careful to keep in our possession no property, but what we have the means of using for God in works of charity and piety. We must not lay up for ourselves treasures on earth. We must regard whatever property may be put into our hands, as a talent to be carefully and diligently improved; and instead of expending it in needless indulgences, or making it the object of our love, or the ground of our confidence, we must faithfully employ it all in the service of God, or in promoting the welfare of mankind. In no other way can we secure ourselves from its ruinous influence. The moment we begin to lay it up as a security against the time to come, or to employ it in ministering to our carnal or selfish gratification; from that moment will it begin to consume our spiritual life, and sink us into a state of lukewarmness and apostacy.

[*Concluded next number.*]

TESTIMONIES TO THE EXCELLENCY OF THE SCRIPTURES.

I HAVE carefully and regularly perused these Holy Scriptures, and am of opinion, that the volume, independently of its divine origin, contains more sublimity, purer morality, more important history, and finer strains of eloquence, than can be collected from all other books, in whatever language they may have been written.—*Sir William Jones.*

And Sir William Jones understood many languages, and had read a vast quantity of books. If there had been any thing in the form of books, worthy to be compared with the Sacred Scriptures, no one was more likely to have met with it than he. What a privilege that we have all access to that blessed volume. God grant we may not neglect to improve by it.

THE Bible is a matchless volume; it is impossible we can study it too much, or esteem it too highly.—*Robert Boyle.*

To a person who asked John Locke, that great philosopher and profound reasoner, which was the shortest and surest way for a young man to attain to the knowledge of true religion, he replied, "Let him study the Holy Scriptures, especially the New Testament, therein are contained the words of eternal life. IT HAS GOD FOR ITS AUTHOR, SALVATION FOR ITS END, AND TRUTH WITHOUT ANY MIXTURE OF ERROR FOR ITS MATTER." Again, he said, "It is all pure, all sincere; nothing too much, nothing wanting."

And Locke had studied the Scriptures, and he was as able as most to form a just estimate of their character and worth.

THERE never was found in any age of the world, either philosopher, or sect, or law, or discipline, which did so highly exalt the public good as the Christian faith.—*Lord Bacon.*

THERE is no book upon which we can rest in a dying moment but the Bible.—*Selden, the Great Lawyer, called by foreigners the Glory of England.*

BRIEF MEMOIR OF JOHN GRAHAM.

JOHN GRAHAM was born in Hull, on the 7th of June, in the year 1805, but afterwards lived in Newcastle.—During his youth he was graciously preserved from indulging in those vices and follies into which the youth of large towns so frequently fall. As he grew towards manhood, his mind became powerfully impressed with the importance of religion. He became unhappy at the remembrance of his sins, and thoughts of the Divine displeasure alarmed and afflicted his soul. He saw the necessity of giving himself decidedly to God, and of consecrating his days to his service; and he accordingly united himself with God's people, and began to attend with diligence the means of grace. He sought earnestly for light and consolation from on high, and he did not seek in vain.—That God who had made him sensible of his lost and miserable condition, gave him affecting and consolatory views of redeeming love, and favoured him with a delightful assurance of his acceptance with him. His conduct at this time was upright and consistent; such as became the Gospel of Jesus Christ. He was, at this time, connected with the Old Connexion of Methodists. His marriage, along with other considerations, led him afterwards to unite with the Christian friends worshipping in Ebenezer Chapel, New Road, in this town, and in connection with those friends he became a local preacher. In this new capacity, as a preacher of the Gospel, he was very zealous and laborious. He was faithful to his engagements, and, regardless of storms and darkness, and personal inconvenience, he regularly denied himself, and took up his cross, that he might accomplish the work which God had given him to do. And his labours were not in vain in the Lord: he was made a blessing to the souls of many.

Our friend, along with his Christian brethren of Ebenezer generally, afterwards united themselves with the friends of Salem Chapel, Newcastle on Tyne, and he continued in connection with the church assembling there to the last. He still continued his labours as a local preacher, and it was, we believe, while about his master's business in one of the country places, that he took that severe cold, which ultimately brought him to the grave. His cough, brought on by his severe cold, caused the rupture of a blood-vessel in the lungs, and thus brought on the consumption which terminated his earthly existence.

He was disabled from taking his appointments on the plan, and I believe, from attending the public means of grace, before my connection with the church at Salem. I had, however, frequent opportunities of seeing him, and conversing with him at his own home. I always found him peaceful in soul, and resigned to the will of God. He was not, when I first visited him, expecting to die; but he was manifestly prepared for death, and he could look forward and contemplate death without alarm or anxiety. I had frequent and close conversations with him, and on some occasions when I visited him he was suffering severely from his violent and continual cough, as well as from acute bodily pain; but I never heard him murmur, and I never heard him utter a word that betrayed impatience, or dissatisfaction with the arrangements of providence. He appeared to have no doubt but that his sufferings were laid upon him by his Heavenly Father, and he appeared to repose in his Heavenly Father's goodness with a strong, an even, and a joyous confidence. He was familiar with the Scriptures, and he was able, by the blessing of Heaven, to apply them to his own case, to the strengthening and comforting of his soul. His thoughts of the future unseen world appeared to be mixed with no distressing fears; I could not even discover in him the slightest reluctance to die. He felt for his two children, whose mother had gone home to her rest several years before; and he felt for his aged, affectionate, and widowed mother; but he believed that God would take care of them, and he calmly commended them into his hands. I was often struck with the fact, as I have been struck with it in many other cases, that the afflicted one, the daily, constant sufferer, was the happiest person in the family; the happiest person in the house.—Even I myself, when I sat by him, felt more as one who was receiving comfort, than as one administering to the comfort of another.

One morning when I went; the last time I visited him perhaps but two,—he asked me, with some appearance, if not of anxiety, of great interest and earnestness, what I thought about the state of departed saints. "What do you think becomes of them," said he, "from the time they leave the body, to the time of the resurrection?" I answered, in the words of the Apostle, "To be absent from the body, is to be present with the Lord." The Apostle, when he looked forward to death, expected that when he removed from the church on earth, he should go at once to the church in heaven: hence these words also, "to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better." He replied; "Well, I think so too. I have always thought so: and I believe that when I leave this body, I shall go to live with Christ, and to be happy in Heaven. But I have had a person with me who seemed to intimate, that departed saints sleep after death, and go not to share the joys of Heaven till the resurrection; and I could not receive such doctrine." I told him he had no need to receive it, that there was neither comfort nor Christianity in such doctrine, and with many other words we comforted each other, in prospect of our future rest. His mind appeared perfectly happy, as did the mind of his aged mother, and we prayed and rejoiced together.

He died on the 18th of last month, peaceful and happy, confiding in God, and full of hope of a blessed immortality, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

ON PREACHING.

People wonder why the Gospel does not produce the same powerful and happy effects in our day, as it did when preached in the days of Wesley and Whitfield, and in the days of the Apostles. They wonder how it is that with so many preachers as there are at present, so little impression should be made on the public mind, while, in the days of the Apostles, and in the days of Wesley and Whitfield, one single man was enabled to shake a whole country, and engage the eager attention of a whole continent. To me there appears no mystery in the matter whatever. I do *not* wonder at the difference between the effects produced by the preaching of Wesley and Whitfield and of the Apostles, and the principal part of the preaching of the present day. The matter appears to me to be perfectly plain; I can, I imagine, see a sufficient reason for the difference.

In the first place, there was a great difference between the *preaching* of Wesley and Whitfield and the Apostles, both in matter and manner, and the preaching of the great mass of preachers of the present day. The Apostles preached the *whole Gospel;* they kept back nothing. When the Redeemer sent them forth, he directed them to teach all things whatsoever he had commanded them, and they did so. They inculcated every duty that Christ had inculcated, however contrary to prevailing tastes and customs, and to the worldly interests of men; and, in the enforcement of these duties, they employed every doctrine that Christ had taught, however contrary to prevailing notions. And they preached with earnestness and boldness also, as men who felt the importance, and were assured of the truth, of what they taught. There was nothing laboured or formal about their addresses: they spoke from full hearts, and with a simple desire to acquit themselves faithfully to God, and to save the souls of their hearers. And it was hardly possible that the Gospel could be preached thus, without proving effectual in the conversion of souls to God. It was altogether impossible that the Gospel should be preached in this way, without seizing hold of men's attention, and rousing the minds of all classes. It was the fulness and faithfulness, the earnestness and simplicity of the preaching of the Apostles, in the first place, that gave them such power over the minds of men, and secured to them such abundant success.

It was, in a great measure, the same with the preaching of Wesley and Whitfield. Neither Wesley nor Whitfield preached the Gospel so fully as the Apostles, nor did Whitfield preach it so fully as Wesley; but both preached it much more fully, in many important particulars, than had for a long time been customary. Wesley, especially, brought out of the Gospel many forgotten or neglected truths and duties. He took the Gospel, not so much as he found it in homilies, catechisms, and creeds, but as he found it in the New Testament. He took Christ's own discourses: and explained them, and enforced them with great earnestness. He did not take counsel of flesh and blood; nor did he pay regard to men's worldly interests or to fleshly ease; he inculcated the strict injunctions of Christ, and called on men to obey them, though at the peril of their lives. He taught men that they should pluck out a right eye, or cut off a right hand, rather than allow it to be a hindrance to their salvation. He taught men that they should not lay up for themselves treasures on earth,—that riches are deceitful,—that it is exceedingly hard for rich men to be saved,—that it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven. He taught that men should do to others as they would have others do to them,—that Christians should not judge each other, that they should not be masters over each other,—that they should have but one master, Christ Jesus, and that they should all be brethren,—that all should judge for themselves what is true and what is right,—that they should admit to their fellowship all whom Christ had admitted to fellowship with him,—that Christ came to save men from all sin, and that it is our duty to live in righteousness and true holiness all our days,—that Christ died for all men,—that he died that all might be saved. These, and many other principles and precepts similar, which in those days were much neglected, were preached by Wesley, and to the inculcation of these truly Gospel practical principles, may be attributed much of the success of his preaching. And then all these things were preached with earnestness, and zeal, and great energy. Wesley *felt* what he said, and spoke with power. And Whitfield did the same. Though Whitfield's preaching was neither so full of truth nor so free from error as Wesley's, yet in feeling and power he was inferior perhaps to no one. The great principles of the Gospel had full power over him, and he spoke as one to whom the things unseen were present realities,—as one who felt himself surrounded with the full blaze of the eternal world. There was nothing trifling, nothing formal and cold; it was all life, and love, and power. It was natural that such preaching as this should be successful; it could not do otherwise than rouse the public mind.

And then the preachers themselves were not such men as the generality of those who preach the Gospel in the present day are: they were men who practised what they preached. They were spiritual, benevolent, disinterested. They believed the Bible, and they trusted in God. They staggered not at God's promises, but believed that what he had said, he was able and willing to perform. They had faith in God's providence: they believed that he numbered the hairs of their head,—that he directed their steps,—that he was always standing by them, and that he overruled all things for their good. They loved God with all their heart, and they loved their neighbours as themselves. They employed their property for God. They did not lay up for themselves treasures on earth; they laid up for themselves treasures in heaven, by employing them in doing good to the bodies and souls of their fellow-men. They were temperate and self-denying. Whether they ate, or drank, or whatever they did, they did all to the glory of God. They kept the body in subjection. The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, were mortified. Their hearts were in heaven; their meat and their drink were to do the will of their heavenly Father, and to finish his work. They were courageous too. They shrunk from no reproach; they dreaded no persecution. They were patient and meek; enduring the severest hardships, and meekly and peacefully submitting to the most cruel insults and injuries. They were thorough-going men of God; and they made it manifest that they lived, and laboured, and suffered for no other end than to please God, to promote the welfare of their fellow-men, and to lay hold on eternal life.

But the character of many who preach the Gospel in the present day is very different. There are multitudes of those who preach the Gospel at the present day, who cannot be regarded as examples of spirituality and benevolence at all. The generality of ministers of the present day do not appear to trust in God. They appear to have doubts of the truth of God's promises, and of the propriety of some of his commands. They lay up for themselves treasures on earth; they trust in uncertain riches, instead of trusting in the living God. They require stipulated salaries, and worldly securities for the payment. Their trust for the future is in Banks and Bonds, in Life Insurances and Beneficent Funds. They are anxious and distrustful; they shrink from the very thought of trusting in the providence of God, and casting their care on him. They walk by sight, and not by faith; and are afraid to stir a step, without some worldly security that it shall cost them nothing. So far from leaving all for Christ, and risking life itself in his cause, they are afraid to risk any thing for his sake. Nor are they examples of strict, universal temperance. They seek ease and pleasure for the flesh. Many of them indulge in all the luxuries of life, and they are few indeed that are inured to hardness as good soldiers of our Lord Jesus Christ. To procure the means of self-indulgence, they betray the truth. They court the patronage of the rich, and despise the poor. They seek help from the ungodly, and seek to gain the favour of the world by adopting its corrupt principles, and conforming to its evil customs. While they bear the name of Christ, they are strangers to his spirit; and while they preach of God, and Christ, and heaven, their example preaches of little but earthliness, and selfishness, and unbelief. They are more like the ancient Scribes and Pharisees, than Christ and his Apostles. They are proud, intolerant, and domineering. They bind burdens on others, which they will not bear themselves. They are violent against heterodoxy, but indulgent towards sin; they make great pretensions to orthodoxy, but pay little regard to the spirit and example of Christ. They love the uppermost rooms [at] feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the market places, and to be called of men masters, and reverends, and doctors. They have no trust in the power of truth, or they have a consciousness that truth is not on their side, hence they are afraid of the people exercising freely their own judgments, and acting on their own convictions of what is true and right. They thus shut up, as far as they can, the kingdom of heaven against men; and neither go in themselves, nor suffer those to go in that are wishful to enter. They supplant the laws of God, or make them of no effect, by laws of their own; and they put aside the doctrines of Christ and his Apostles, to make way for their own inventions. They are more concerned for their own authority, than for the authority of Christ, and are more anxious to support the majesty of their own decisions, than to maintain the honour of God. They will suffer the laws of God to be broken without a reproof; but they visit a breach of their own laws with the severest punishments they can inflict. They are more anxious for a fair reputation with men, than for the approbation of God; and they trust more for success in their schemes to the patronage of the wealthy and powerful, than they do to the smile and blessing of heaven. They are eager after money, and plead more powerfully with men for their contributions, than they do for their souls. Their zeal for souls has more of party spirit than of Christian godly charity; and they are more anxious to gain people to their sect and to their interest, than they are to gain them thoroughly to Christ. They think little of the conversion of souls, if they are not added to their party; and they think a great deal of a proselyte to their party, especially if it be a wealthy person, whether he be truly converted or not. They are shepherds that care rather for the fleece than for the flock, and they could have adopted the words of the Apostle with stricter propriety, if he had happened to say, We seek not you, but your's. They will compass sea and land to make a proselyte, and when he is made, they oftener make him a bigot and a persecutor, than a follower of the gentle, loving Saviour. And they are divided among themselves, and many of them, like rival, jealous shepherds, labour more to steal each other's sheep, than to go to seek and to save that which is lost. They will not let their flocks unite, when their flocks are willing to do so; but will rather set at defiance the most earnest wish of their chief shepherd, than throw down the partition walls which they have built in his fold, or tear up the partition hedges which they have planted in his pastures.

And they receive into the fold those whom Christ has rejected; and they reject and drive away those whom Christ has received. They contend for the mastery over each other also, and beat and smite their fellow-servants, because they will not submit to their will, and join with them in promoting their party plans and purposes. And they are more zealous about that which is little, than they are about that which is great. They pay more attention to forms and shadows of things, than they do to the substance; and to names and professions, than to hearty obedience. They esteem men, not according to the soundness of their belief in the great truths of religion, and the sincerity and faithfulness of their obedience to the will of God, but according to the measure of their conformity to themselves and their denomination. They think more of opinion than of faith, and of uniformity than of obedience. They pay tithe of mint, anise, and cummin, and omit the weightier matters of the law, justice, mercy, and faithfulness. They strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel. A man who is not of their party, is made an offender for a word; while one who favours their ambitious and selfish projects, may pass uncensured, though a transgressor of the plainest laws of God. They are not sincere. They speak favourably of liberty, of unity, and brotherly love, but they are despotical, schismatical, and intolerant. They complain of their forefathers for their cruel persecution of the reformers of old, and yet they imitate the conduct of their forefathers, by persecuting the reformers of their own times. They call that madness in the living, which they extol as virtuous and apostolical in the dead. In short, their wisdom is the wisdom of the world, and not the wisdom of Christ; their faith rests on the authority of man, rather than on the word of God; and their whole behaviour is an inconsistent and discordant mixture of things earthly and things heavenly, of some things borrowed from Christ, and other things belonging to Belial. We know there are exceptions, but such, we fear, are the mass of the hired preachers of the Gospel of the present day. We do not speak thus from anger or from bitterness: many of them, we are persuaded, have never had the truth placed clearly and fully before them, and God only can say, to what extent those, of whom we speak, are guilty before him. But such is the general character of the regular salaried ministers of the present day: they neither preach the Gospel, nor live the Gospel in its purity and fulness.

And these are the principal reasons why the preaching of the present day is so much less effectual in converting sinners and spreading the religion of Christ, than the preaching of Wesley and Whitfield, and the preaching of the first Apostles was. It would be folly to expect great and beneficial effects to be produced by preaching, until there is a radical and thorough change both in the preaching and the lives of ministers. But let ministers preach and live as Christ and his Apostles preached and lived,—let them break loose from the bonds and fetters in which they are held by the creeds and laws of men, and return to the simple Gospel of Christ,—let them come fairly out from the world, and rest for help and patronage on God alone,—let them resume their Christian liberty, and preach and act as men who know no master but Christ Jesus,—let them have faith in God, and confidence in his truth, and risking all for Christ, go forth, bearing his reproach, boldly, freely, and unflinchingly preaching the entire and unadulterated Gospel of Christ,—in short, let them, forgetting all other considerations, regard themselves as appointed by God, by preaching and living the whole Gospel of Christ, to enlighten, and convert, and save the souls of all mankind,—let them learn to regard this as their one great business, and give themselves to the work with their whole souls, and they will soon see signs and wonders wrought again. They would shake the land from the centre to the sea, and their fame would go forth, and their influence would be felt to the ends of the earth. And we believe that the time is at hand, when these great and blessed changes shall take place. There is a moving in the professing world. Multitudes on all sides are weary of things as they are, and sighing, and longing, and praying for a happy change. And they shall not sigh and pray in vain. A blessed reformation dawns upon us: a great and solemn revolution is approaching. The creeds and systems of church discipline of man's invention, are tottering and crumbling to pieces, and the Gospel of Christ, and the order and institutions of heaven, are regaining their proper place in the esteem of many. A new race is springing up, a race of men who can endure no sway but the sway of Emanuel; who can see no beauty or glory, but in the simple and unperverted religion of the Gospel. And they are declaring the truth with freedom and power, and carrying its influence through the masses of our countrymen in all directions. And their numbers are daily increasing. Let them but be faithful,—let them, regardless of earthly considerations, go forward, consulting only the will of their Heavenly Father, and willing to suffer reproach and persecution for his sake, and neither earth nor hell will be able to hinder them from bringing about a mighty, a lasting, and a universal revival of the religion of Christ.

POLITICS.

There are no politics equal to those which the Scriptures teach.—*John Milton.*

Very true: the best system of *worldly* politics is but a parcel of blunders, compared with the politics of the New Testament. The religion of Christ makes every man a ruler and a judge to himself; it enables him to do right, without the obligations of human laws. If all were to embrace the religion of Christ, and fully carry out its principles, we should have all the benefits of good government many times over, and that without the expense of either king, lords, or commons, of either armies, navies, lawyers, or executioners.

TRACTS.

We want to publish a series of tracts, but we are short of money. We have no doubt but the tracts would pay for themselves in time, but we do not want to run into debt. We want to have the money to begin with. The tracts will be of a new kind, very different from the generality of those published by the Tract Society. We want to furnish a lot of tracts full of plain, solid, unadultered, thorough-going Gospel doctrine. We think such tracts as are generally published by the Tract Society have done nearly all the good they can do, and that a better kind of tracts is quite necessary, if people are to be roused and permanently benefitted. Besides, the Tract Society's publications are much too dear. How the Tract Society manages its concerns, we cannot tell; but we know that with ready money to go to the printer with, we can furnish tracts almost twice as cheap as the Tract Society sells its tracts. And so with books. We propose to sell a hundred twelve-page tracts for about two shillings, or at the highest at two and sixpence. The tracts may either be sold or distributed gratis, as the purchasers may think best.

What we propose to our friends at present is, that they should send us help as they may be able, and either receive back their entire contributions in tracts, at the wholesale price, or, if they think proper, receive their contributions in money as soon as the tracts are sold. If any would prefer *giving* us help, we, of course, shall not refuse it, but we do not press for gifts. Whatever property there may be in the book and tract establishment, will be sacredly used as public property, for the interests of religion alone. Our sole desire is, to be able to promote more extensively the religion of Christ.

We wish in every considerable town to have a stall on market days, for the sale of tracts and useful publications, and we wish also to have tracts and useful publications sent round the country generally by some means. We wish to engage the attention of the public at large to the great practical principles of the religion of Christ. We hope our friends will lend us their help. Several have promised liberal assistance already, and as soon as we can see fifty pounds at our command, we shall begin to publish immediately. Wealthier friends may subscribe as individuals, if they please, and our less able friends may subscribe in companies. Who will begin?

INTELLIGENCE.

Things still continue to wear a favourable aspect with respect to the progress of Evangelical Reform. Light is spreading, and a spirit of inquiry is awakening on all hands.

Since the last intelligence was communicated, J. Barker has been at Manchester, Mossley, Halifax, and Bradford. At Manchester the friends have taken and fitted up an excellent room, just out of Peter Street, near Peter Street Chapel. The room is twenty-four yards in length, and either twelve or fourteen in breadth. A portion of the room is made into vestries, but the partition is loose, and can be removed whenever the numbers attending may render it necessary. The prospects of the Manchester friends are encouraging beyond all previous expectation.—We hope they will resolve, by the grace of God, to be faithful to their Head, and carry out the principles of his Gospel in all their length and breadth. The room is to be publicly opened on the 12th inst.

On the 21st of last month, J. Barker was at Mossley. In the morning at nine o'clock, he met those who were wishful to unite together as a Christian church on New Testament principles, and addressed them on the terms of church fellowship laid down by Christ and his apostles, and on the duties devolving upon members of the church towards each other, towards their Saviour, and towards the world. The room in which the church met was a large upper room, capable of holding, we should suppose, more than a thousand people. At half-past ten, J. Barker preached from Eph. iv. 30, "And grieve not the holy spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed to the day of redemption." The room was filled, and a gracious influence pervaded the meeting. J. Barker preached again at two, in the same room, to a still larger congregation than in the forenoon. The text was Ezek. xxxiii. 11, "Say unto them, as I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways, for why will ye die, O house of Israel."

From Mossley J. Barker proceeded a distance of twenty miles or upwards to Halifax, where he preached the same evening to a very crowded audience in the Odd Fellows' Hall, from the case of the slothful servant in Matt. xxv. The friends at Halifax have taken a room about seventeen yards by nine. The room was opened that day by W. Trotter, who preached in the room in the forenoon, and in the Odd Fellows' Hall in the afternoon. The congregations were good through the whole day, and in the evening there could hardly be less than fifteen or sixteen hundred people present. On the Monday evening after, J. Barker lectured in the Odd Fellows' Hall, Halifax, on Revivals.

On Tuesday, the 23rd last month, at twelve o'clock, J. Barker laid the foundation stone of a New Chapel, in Croft Street, Bradford. The chapel is to be about eighteen yards by fourteen, and is to have a school under it both for Sabbath and week-day instruction. After laying the stone, J. Barker addressed the assembled multitude, on the principles held by the friends who had undertaken the erection of the New Chapel. They acknowledged no Head but Christ, no authority but Christ's, no creed or book of laws but the New Testament. The church would be subject to no Conference, nor would it have any power over other churches. The terms of communion with the church would be the same as were appointed by Christ as the condition of communion with him and with his Father, namely, Faith in Christ, showing itself to be living faith by obedience to Christ. The terms of communion would be faith, not opinion; and obedience to God, not conformity to any laws of man. The church intended to carry out the whole Gospel. It was intended that suitable provision should be made for all the poor members, and that instruction should be given to all their children. Efforts were to be made for spreading the knowledge and blessings of the Gospel, not only by preaching, but also, by the extensive circulation of useful tracts and cheap evangelical books and pamphlets. Once a week, and once on a Sabbath, the church intended to hold meetings for free ministration also, in which every one might speak, or read a portion of Scripture, expound or exhort, as the case might be, and all be edified.—The church was based on the broad principles of Gospel liberty, and an experiment was to be made, whether the system of the Saviour is capable of being carried out in all its purity and in all its fulness. In the evening of the same day, at half-past seven, J. Barker preached in the Temperance Hall, Bradford, from Isa. 51, 7, 8.

We have received encouraging information from Hawarden, Wales, and also, from Sheffield, Dudley, and Leeds. We hope the friends in every place will endeavour to be examples to their neighbours in all things; in word, in temper, and in behaviour. Do not let us talk about reforming others, and neglect to reform ourselves. True reform begins at home, and we shall preach and write for reform in vain, unless we are patterns of Gospel purity and temperance, of Gospel zeal and forbearance and charity in our own characters. A solemn weight of responsibility rests upon us, and terrible will be our future reckoning, if we walk not worthy of the high and holy calling with which we are called. The Lord direct us, and assist us, and make us as a city set on a hill, as the lights of the world, and may multitudes, by seeing our good works, be led to glorify our Father which is in Heaven. Amen.

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THE RIGHT OF PRIVATE JUDGMENT.—Continued.

4. The man who relinquishes the right of private judgment, by that act becomes a slave. He may give up this right in compliance with the wishes of a Pope, a Council, a General Assembly, or a Conference; it matters not; he thereby becomes a slave. What is it that makes the difference between slavery and freedom? Why simply this: that a free man determines for himself what is proper to be done, and what is proper to be omitted, and acts according to his convictions; a slave bows implicitly to the decision of another. A free man in the United States of America judges it proper and befitting that he should abstain from all unnecessary labour on the first day of the week; and no power can interpose to compel him to act contrary to the convictions of his mind. He believes it to be right and profitable that he should attend the public worship of Almighty God on that day; none can interfere to prevent him from doing this. He is free, and this is the proof of his freedom, he is at liberty to do what he believes to be right, and to avoid whatever he believes to be wrong. Not so the slave. He is bound by another's will, not his own; he is governed by the convictions or inclinations of another mind, not of his own. *He* may judge it best to avoid all unnecessary labour on the first day of the week; but if his master should require such labour to be performed, the wretched slave is compelled to submit. *He* may regard it at once as a privilege and a duty to attend public worship, but if his master should forbid it, that privilege he must not realize, that duty he must not fulfil. Now this, I contend, is the precise position of every man who relinquishes the right of private judgment. A minister who retains and exercises this right, may come to the conclusion, that to lay up treasure for himself on earth is unscriptural and wrong; that, on the contrary, he is bound in duty to employ all his superfluous property in works of piety and beneficence. He may be led to see also, that to contribute annually to a certain institution, of which he is a member, is really laying up for himself treasure upon earth, and *is not* devoting the whole of his superfluous property to pious and benevolent uses. Now if this minister possesses and exercises the right of private judgment, like the free man in America, he acts on his convictions, he withdraws from the institution, and disposes of the property, that he has been accustomed to contribute to it, in some other, and, as he judges, some better way: and all the while no one interferes to molest or injure him for so doing. He is free. But suppose, for a moment, that he is the minister of a denomination that requires its mem-

bers implicitly to submit to all its rules and regulations; and suppose that one of its regulations is, that all the ministers in the body shall be members of the very institution to which he conscientiously objects. And suppose still further, that he has promised subjection to the laws of the community, and that, from considerations of ease, or interest, or power, or ought else, he resolves to keep his promise, and obey the objectionable law: What now is his position? Why simply this: He believes it to be wrong to lay up for himself treasure on earth, but the law of the denomination requires him to do it. He believes it to be his duty to expend all his superfluous substance in works of piety and benevolence, but the law of the community forbids him to do this. He has promised to keep this law, and he cannot break it without serious consequences to himself; and so to avoid those consequences, and keep his promise, and obey the law, he neglects what he believes to be his duty, and he does what he believes to be wrong. Is he not then a slave? A slave first to his denomination, then to the vow or promise that he has rashly made, and last of all to the selfish considerations by which the law of the community is enforced? Is he not a slave?

I know it may be said, "He may leave the community, and thus absolve himself from allegiance to its laws." But then he may be as much bound in conscience to remain in the community (at least, not voluntarily to leave it) as he is to refuse subjection to one of its laws. "Then he may break the law and take the consequences." So he will, if he be an honest, upright, Christian man; but be it remembered that the North American slave has the same alternative. *He* may disobey his master, obey his God, and take the consequences. But though this would show that he had *not the spirit of a slave*, it would still show most decisively that he was *in the condition* of a slave. "Yes, but the consequences would not be so serious in the one case as in the other." Perhaps not; but that does not affect the question: in either case the consequences are so serious as to constitute a strong temptation to obey man rather than God. He who presents this temptation, does what he can to make his fellow man a slave; and he who yields to this temptation, *actually consents* to become a slave. The man who engages to support all the decisions of a body, before he knows what these decisions are to be; the man who promises full and absolute submission to regulations which he may afterwards come to regard as unscriptural in their character, and pernicious in their tendency, engages and promises to be a slave. The system which requires this, is a system of slavery; it takes away, as far as it can, that self-determining power, and exacts that servile submission to another's will, in which the chief and only important difference between slavery and freedom consists; and it thus establishes itself by the demolition of man's noblest rights, and his degradation to a state of the most unhappy and disgraceful vassallage.

5. Without exercising the right of private judgment it is impossible for us so to act as to please God. A great deal of ridicule has been heaped, of late, on a certain individual, for having said in one of his publications, "The principle which I hold is, that we ought to do what we believe to be right, though all the usages and laws in the world were against us." From the connection in which this passages stands, it is obvious that the "laws" referred to are human laws, and that the meaning of the declaration is simply this; we ought to do what we believe *God's* law requires, though all *human* laws and usages should require the contrary. And where, now, is the individual pretending to be a Christian, who can maintain the reverse of this? Where is the individual who can stand forth in the face of earth and heaven, and say, "I believe that God's law requires me to pursue a certain course; but that course is contrary to the usages and laws of the community of which I am a member; and I do deliberately declare that I shall adhere to the laws and usages of the community; though I believe that I thereby violate the law of God?" Where is the individual, I ask again, who can call himself a Christian, and make such a declaration as this?

And suppose such an individual could be found, in what light could he expect to be regarded by his God? Could he hope for God's approbation of such a speech as this? Could he expect that God should say, "Thou hast well spoken?" Why, the very idea of such a declaration as this, shocks every upright feeling in the breasts of those who make no pretensions to personal religion. However a man of the world may be disposed to *act* on this principle, and conform to human customs and human laws, in opposition to the dictates of his conscience, still there is scarcely a worldly man to be found who would not shrink with horror from one who could openly, in the face of day, make a declaration like the above. How then must such a declaration be regarded by him who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, and who cannot look upon sin without abhorrence? Reader, suppose that the whole intelligent universe were assembled together, by the summons of the Most High. Suppose that angels, men, and demons, wait in breathless, dread suspense, while the Almighty Sovereign, addressing himself to thee, inquires, "Wilt thou do what thou believest my law requires, though all human laws and usages should require the contrary?" What answer couldst thou give? Couldst thou, in the face of that assembly, and in the face of him who sitteth on the throne, say, "No, I intend to comply with human laws and usages whether they seem to me to agree with thy law or not?" Couldst thou give that answer to the solemn question? Suppose, for a moment, that thou couldst, might we not expect a thrill of horror to run through the whole assembly? and while angels weep, and men exclaim, might we not expect the infernal spirits themselves to be astonished at the daring impiety of the man who, under circumstances like these, could avow his intention to obey man rather than God? Reader, the only answer that could be given, in such a case as this, is the only answer that can be acceptable to God, either in time or in eternity; and there is really no alternative between doing what we believe to be ight, in obedience to God's laws, and oing what we believe to be wrong, in conformity to human customs, and in obedience to human laws.

6. Without the exercise of individual judgment no man can be a Christian. What is it to be a Christian? A Christian is one who believes Christ's words, obeys Christ's commands, and relies on Christ's promises. But if we are to believe Christ's words, we must inquire what they are; and if we are to believe them in the sense in which they were spoken or written, we must inquire what they *mean* as well. Suppose a Council, or a General Assembly, should determine that such and such are the words of Christ; and suppose that, when we search the New Testament diligently through, we are unable to find them there; are we not bound by our allegiance to Christ, to reject the decisions of the Council or Assembly, and abide by what we see to be in very truth the words of Christ? Or suppose that the Council, or General Assembly, should decide that a particular declaration of the Saviour's is to be understood in a certain given sense,—that "Give us *this* day our daily bread" means, "assist us in our diligent efforts to lay up treasures for ourselves on earth as a provision against a *future day*;" and suppose, that after the most diligent examination of the subject, we are compelled to differ from the Assembly, or Conference, as to the meaning of the passage in question; are we not bound by our allegiance to Christ to reject that interpretation of his words, which appears to us to be absurd and false, and to adhere to that which commends itself to our judgment as reasonable and true? If we pursue a different course, can we be said to believe *Christ's* words? Do we not, in this case, believe the words of the Conference, or Assembly, rather than the words of Christ?

And so with regard to Christ's commands. If we are to obey Christ's commands, we must know what they are; and if we are to obey them in the sense in which the Saviour intended them to be obeyed, we must ascertain their meaning also. Christ says, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth." He commands us, on the contrary, "as we have opportunity, to do good unto all men, but especially to the household of faith." Suppose, now, that an individual understands these directions of the Saviour in their plain obvious signification; but, suppose, at the same time, that he is a member of some community that puts a different construction on these passages, and that, in consequence, he is required to take part in some scheme which he cannot but regard as a violation of Christ's commands;—what is he to do in a case like this? Is he to act according to his own convictions, relative to the import of Christ's requirements? Or is he, because the community requires him to do so, to act in opposition to these convictions? In this case, would he not plainly be the servant of the community, rather than the servant of Christ?

Another man is led conscientiously to believe, that Baptism by Water was not established by Jesus Christ, as a permanent ordinance in his church; and that, in consequence, he, as a minister of Christ, has no authority to baptize with water.—But, then, he is required, by the rules of the sect to which he belongs, to take children in his arms, and sprinkling them with water, to say, "I baptize thee, in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." What course is he to pursue? Seek further light, you say, perhaps. Well, it is unquestionably our duty to be always seeking further light; but until he obtains further light, while his convictions continue to be what they are at present,—what course is he to pursue? Is he to act on those convictions, and abstain from performing a ceremony, for which he believes himself to have no authority from Christ? Or, is he, in compliance with the usage, and in obedience to the laws of his denomination, to take a little one in his arms and say, I baptize thee, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, when he believes, first, that he is not baptizing the child at all, and further, that he has no authority from Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to do any thing of the kind? Suppose he adopts the latter course, can he be regarded as obeying Christ's commands? Does he act like a servant of Jesus Christ? The ordinance he administers *may have been* instituted by Christ, and the ministers of Christ *may* have authority from him to administer it; but this makes *his* conduct appear in no better light. For ought he knows, he is administering a rite which the Saviour never instituted, and claiming Divine authority for an act, that has never been divinely sanctioned or enjoined. Whatever may be the truth respecting the ordinance, this is the only light in which *his* conduct can be viewed; and I leave it for the reader to determine whether, in a case like this, the individual does not act more like the servant of the sect to which he belongs, than the servant of Jesus Christ.

In order for a man to be a Christian, it is necessary that he should rely on Christ's promises. But how can we do this, if we do not for ourselves ascertain what they imply, and if we do not acquaint ourselves with the grounds on which we may safely trust in them? He who, without consulting the word of Christ for himself, expects Christ to do so and so for him, because the creed of his denomination declares that he will do so, relies on the creed rather than on Christ; and no man can truly or intelligently rely on Christ, but he who is acquainted for himself with what Christ *is*, and *says*, and *does*, and trusts in him on these accounts. All confidence but this is blind confidence; it is confidence in man, not in Christ.

Thus, we see, that whether we regard personal Christianity as consisting in the belief of Christ's words, in obedience to Christ's commands, or in reliance on Christ's promises, it is impossible for any man to be a Christian, without the exercise of his individual judgment. A man is no further a Christian than he listens to the voice, follows the directions, and rests on the promises of the Saviour; no man can do this, without exercising his individual judgment; and, therefore, in contending for the right to inquire freely and independently what Christ has revealed, enjoined, and promised, I only contend for the right to be a Christian: the liberty for which I plead, is only the liberty to "follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth."

7. Every man is entitled to judge

for himself in matters of religion, because every man must give an account of himself to God. The present state of being is but a preparatory one; preparatory to another, in which we shall receive according to the deeds done in the body. Our happiness or misery in the world to come, depends on the character we sustain, and the course we pursue in this world; and in order that our character and proceedings may be brought to light, and rewards or punishments apportioned to us accordingly, God has appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he has ordained. Before the judgment seat of Christ we must all appear, to receive according to what we have done, whether it be good or bad. Every sentiment we entertain, and every feeling that we cherish, every word we utter, and every action we perform, must be brought into judgment then, and the point to which the reader's attention is especially solicited, is this, THAT WE CANNOT REPRESENT EACH OTHER AT THAT DAY. Every man must give an account of *himself* to God. And if every man is to stand on his own behalf, and answer for his own conduct at that day, is it not perfectly plain that every man ought to judge for himself what course of conduct he shall pursue? I was conversing with a friend on this subject some time ago; he was acquainted with the circumstances under which I was placed at that time, and apprehensive of the consequences that might ensue from the position I had taken. He asked me, if I did not think it would be better to yield: "Though you may not think it exactly right to do what your brethren require; though they may require you to abstain from what *you* regard as your duty; will it not be better, think you, for the sake of peace, and for the sake of the facilities for usefulness which your present situation affords;—will it not be better for the sake of these things, to comply with the wishes of your brethren?" Well, I said in reply, suppose that I should do so; suppose that in compliance with the requirements of my brethren, I do what I believe to be wrong, and neglect what I believe to be my duty, will my brethren answer for it at the bar of God? If what I believe to be wrong should prove to be wrong in reality, and if what I believe to be my duty should prove to be my duty in very deed: and if I should thus stand convicted at the last day, of neglecting my duty and sinning against God, will my brethren stand between me and the consequences? Will they take the consequences on themselves, and let me go free? And even if they were disposed to do so, could they be allowed to do so? Would the Almighty accept of them as my representatives, and inflict on *them* the punishment that *my* conduct deserved? "No, no," said my friend, "you must answer for your own conduct at the last day." Then, said I, if I am to answer for my conduct then, I must have the regulation of my conduct now. And what I said to my friend, I repeat here: If every man is to bear his own burden at the last, every man ought to choose his own burden now; and that man is a traitor to himself as well as to his God,—he betrays his own best, highest interests, as well as the interests of truth and righteousness, who consents, in submission to any authority on earth, to neglect what he believes to be his duty, or to do what he believes to be wrong.

8. I have now presented to my readers the chief arguments in favour of the right of private judgment; but there are two additional considerations to which, for a moment, I solicit their attention. They are intended to show the consequences that respectively flow from the denial of this right, and the maintenance of it; and they, therefore, deserve the most serious attention of all those who wish to understand the subject. They are as follows:—

1. The great and general declension from truth and piety that has taken place in the church of Christ, is mainly to be attributed to the denial of this right by some, and its relinquishment by others. As long as the members of the church freely exercised their minds on religious subjects, acknowledging no Lord but Christ, and making it the great business of their lives to ascertain and do Christ's will, the church itself had the best possible security against the general prevalence either of error or of sin. As long as each individual

mind was exercised in inquiring, What is truth? and, What is duty? as long as each sought for truth in the great fountain of infinite and eternal truth;—and as long as each made the revealed will of God his great standard and rule of duty, the security of the church from the general prevalence of error and sin was all but absolute.* One or two minds might hearken to the delusions of error, but then there were thousands of other minds independently exercising their various powers, to correct their errors and lead them to the knowledge of the truth. One or two, peradventure, might go astray; but then there were multitudes besides, freely walking in the right path, to call them back. See; there are a thousand streams proceeding from as many separate, independent sources, and mingling in one mighty mass of waters underneath. Would it be an easy matter to pollute this mass of waters? You might succeed in defiling a stream or two, but then there are all the other streams flowing from separate and uncorrupted fountains, to counteract your operations, and preserve the purity of the whole. But, suppose, that the whole proceeded from one source, you would only have to corrupt that one source, and the whole would be corrupted. So, when each individual member of the church judges for himself what is true, and what is right, you would, in order to secure the universal triumph of error and sin, have to deceive and corrupt each individual mind, and that would be a task next to impossible. But, when all the members of the church bow implicitly to the decisions of one man's mind, you have only to lead that one mind astray, and you draw all the rest aside as well. I am not now dealing in mere empty speculation; what I say is demonstrated by the whole history of the church of Christ. Look at the history of the middle ages: see the errors and corruptions with which the church was overspread at that time; and then ask yourselves how these errors and corruptions could ever have prevailed so widely, if men had exercised their own judgments in the fear of God? Take the single doctrine of transubstantiation. How could nearly all the members of the church of Christ have been brought to believe that the bread and wine in the Lord's supper were changed by the words of a priest into the actual body and blood of the Redeemer, if they had not agreed blindly to receive the teachings, and implicitly to obey the dictates of some earthly head? Had they judged for themselves, they would have said, "*That* is bread; it looks like bread,—it feels like bread,—it tastes like bread; and *this* is wine:—it has the colour, the smell, the taste of wine: you may utter over these simple elements what incantations you please, they remain bread and wine *only* still." But this was language they dared not use.—They believed in the authority of the Pope and the General Council, and both these had declared the doctrine of transubstantiation true; and though it was a doctrine that shocked the common sense of every man, it was clothed with the authority of the rulers of the church, and the thousands and millions of Christendom assented to it as true.

And so it will always be. Those who are invested with power to dictate to men's consciences, will always be under the strongest temptations to use it for the propagation of erroneous, superstitious, and degrading views: and should you be so foolish as to commit your consciences to the keeping of any man or number of men on earth, you may be found, before you die, holding doctrines, and adopting practices more grossly absurd and superstitious than any which have hitherto disgraced the church of Christ. The only security that the church can have from the inroads of error, is in the free exercise of individual judgment, as the following extract from Chillingworth strikingly shows. It is so pertinent and convincing, and withal so brief, that I cannot deny myself the pleasure of presenting it to the reader. "For seeing the church is a society of men, whereof every one hath free-will in believing, it follows, that the whole aggregate hath free-will in believing. And if any man say, that at least it is morally impossible that of so many, whereof all

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* The security of the church from the *general* prevalence of error would, in such a case, be quite absolute, I should think. J. B.

may believe aright, not any should do so; I answer it is true, *if they did all give themselves any liberty of judgment.* But if all captivate their understandings to one of them, all are as likely to err as that one; and he more likely to err than any other, because he may err and thinks he cannot."—*Chillingworth's Religion of Protestants. Vol.* i. *p.* 364. *Tract Society's Edition.*

2. The other consideration is this. Every great and general revival of true religion that has taken place, has been brought about through the instrumentality of men who claimed the right of private judgment for themselves, and encouraged others to exercise that right as well. Look at the character of the Apostles, and of the first Christians generally. Did they regard human authority in matters of religion? Did they own any Lord or Master save Christ himself? Did they call any man Master on earth? Or, were they the servants of men? No; what Christ taught them, they believed; what Christ enjoined, they laboured to fulfil; what Christ revealed to *them*, they faithfully declared to others. They met with great opposition, it is true; they were even forbidden to speak any more in the name of Christ; but they meekly, yet firmly replied, "Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." Acts iv. 19. Yes, rather than do what they believed to be wrong, or leave undone what they considered to be their duty; rather than reject those doctrines which commended themselves to their judgments as true, or withhold from their fellow-men the message with which their Master had entrusted them; rather than oppose, in any instance, the dictates of their consciences and the convictions of their minds, they took joyfully the spoiling of their goods; they submitted to be incarcerated in loathsome dungeons, and even counted not their lives dear unto them, so that they might finish their course with joy, maintaining a conscience void of offence towards God and towards man. Such was their character, and by the blessing of God on their faithful, conscientious, self-denying efforts, they succeeded in shaking the nations of the earth, and extensively diffusing the light and blessings of religion amongst the habitations of men. The Reformers of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries sustained a similar character, and pursued a similar course. They paid no deference to human authority in matters of religion, they submitted their consciences to the dominion of no man. Their inquiries were, What is true? and, What is right? They searched the Scriptures to obtain an answer; and, as soon as the answer was obtained, they freely communicated to others the information with which they had themselves been favoured. The Scriptures were their only standard, and with this standard they compared the prevailing principles and practices of the times in which they lived. They found many of these principles erroneous, and many of those practices wrong. They went forth and declared their convictions to others, referring them for evidence to the same Scriptures by the study of which these convictions had been produced in their own minds. Men began to inquire, to read, to think, to judge for themselves. Error yielded to the power of truth; degrading, foolish superstitions gave way to a more pure and rational kind of worship; and men, believing the truth, and giving their hearts to God, began to walk in newness of life. Thus did the men labour and succeed. Wycliffe in England, Calvin in Geneva, Luther in Saxony, Zuinglius in Switzerland, and Knox in Scotland, along with those in less conspicuous, but perhaps equally important stations, who co-operated with them in the work of reformation, may furnish proofs of the truth of what has just been stated. Perhaps none of them carried out their principles to perfection. It was scarcely to be expected that they should, at once and entirely, lay aside all those intolerant notions and persecuting maxims, under the influence of which they had been trained from their very infancy; but, considering their circumstances, they did much; and the reason why their endeavours were not crowned with complete and permanent success, seems to

have been that they did not leave the consciences of their followers perfectly free; that they attempted to bind on them their own explications of the words of Christ. As far as they acted on the principle for which I plead, their efforts were attended with success; and had they carried out this principle to its full, legitimate extent, there is every reason to believe, that the churches which they planted would have maintained their doctrinal and practical purity, and have been lasting and universal blessings.

What was the character of the men by whose instrumentality the great revival of religion in this country, at the commencement of the last century, was effected? On what principle did they proceed? The chief amongst them, both in the extent of his labours and the amount of his influence, was John Wesley. What his views on this subject were, may be learnt from the character of the Yearly Conferences that he held with the preachers who assisted him. In the account that is given of one of these Conferences, that held June 25th, 1774, I find the following particulars laid down as the fundamental principles of their proceedings:—

"It is desired, that all things be considered as in the immediate presence of God:

"That we may meet with a single eye, and as little children, who have every thing to learn:

"That every point which is proposed, may be examined to the foundation:

"That every person may speak freely whatever is in his heart:

"And that every question which may arise, should be thoroughly debated and settled. Meantime, let us all pray for a willingness to receive light, to know of every doctrine, whether it be of God."

"Q. 2. How far does each of us agree to submit to the judgment of the majority?

"A. In speculative things each can only submit, so far as his judgment shall be convinced:

"In every practical point each will submit, so far as he can, without wounding his conscience.

"Q. 3. Can a Christian submit any further than this, to any man, or number of men upon earth?

"A. It is plain he cannot, either to bishop, convocation, or general council. And this is that grand principle of private judgment on which all the Reformers proceeded; every man must judge for himself; because every man must give an account of himself to God."—*Wesley's Works. Vol.* vi. *page* 335. *Conference edition, published in* 1810.*

Such were the principles of the man who succeeded, by the blessing of God, in reviving pure religion through the length and breadth of this land. I am aware that he did not always consistently carry out those principles; but this does not diminish the force of the argument at all. Though it would be easy to point out passages in John Wesley's works that could not be reconciled with those principles, and though I may be told that Methodism, as it exists at present, is altogether inconsistent with them, it still remains true that these were the principles on which John Wesley acted in all his reforming movements; and it is plain, that if he had not acted on these principles, he would never have been a Reformer at all.

I have now laid before my readers some of the leading considerations in favour of the right of private judgment. I have shown that God has given us a capacity to judge for ourselves, and furnished us with the means of judging correctly; that God requires us to exercise this capacity and to use those means; that he who relinquishes the right of private judgment becomes a slave to men; that he disqualifies himself for pleasing God; that without the exercise of individual judgment no man can be a Christian; and that we are especially bound to judge for ourselves by this consideration, that every man must give an account of himself to God. We have seen, moreover, that the great and general declension from truth and piety which has taken place, is to be attributed chiefly to the denial of the right of private judgment by some, and its relinquishment by others; and that, in fact, the church can have no security from the intrusions of error and sin, except in the honest, faithful exercise of individual judgment by its members. And, finally, we have seen that all those who have been signally owned by God, in the revival of pure religion, have acted on the principle for which I plead. That from the apostles down to John Wesley, all religious reformers have been men who judged for themselves what was true and what was right, and who boldly and fearlessly declared the convictions of their minds to others. And now I leave those considerations with the reader; it is for him to determine whether I have established the proposition laid down at the commencement, "That it is the inalienable right of every man to judge for himself what it is that God requires, as well as to act on the honest convictions of his mind." I shall next proceed to meet a number of objections to the views which have been laid before my readers, and answer inquiries that may be started in the reader's mind.

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* These important passages, containing the fundamental principles of Primitive Methodism, and of true Christianity, are left out of the Edition of Wesley's Works *now* published by the Conference. J. B.

(To be continued.)

THE STRENGTH OF A REFORMER.

"The chief strength of a reformer lies in speaking truth purely from his own soul, without changing one tone for the purpose of managing, or enlarging a party. Truth, to be powerful, must speak in her own words, and in no other's; must come forth with the authority and spontaneous energy of inspiration, from the depths of the soul. It is the voice of the individual, giving utterance to the irrepressible convictions of his own thoroughly-moved spirit, and not the shout of a crowd, which carries truth far into other souls, and ensures it a stable empire on earth. For want of this, most which is now done, is done superficially. The progress of society depends, chiefly, on the honest inquiry of the individual into the particular work ordained him by God, and on his simplicity in following out his convictions. This moral independence is mightier, as well as holier, than the practice of getting warm in crowds, and of waiting for an impulse from multitudes. The moment a man parts with moral independence, the moment he judges of duty, not from the inward voice, but from the interests and will of a party; the moment he commits himself to a leader or a body, and winks at evil, because division would hurt the cause; the moment he shakes off his particular responsibility, because he is but one of a thousand, or million, by whom the evil is done; that moment he parts with his moral power. He is shorn of the energy of single-hearted faith in the Right and True. He hopes from man's policy, what nothing but loyalty to God can accomplish. He substitutes coarse weapons, forged by man's wisdom, for celestial power."

W. E. C.

ALWAYS CHANGING.

AN OBJECTION ANSWERED.

Objection. You are always changing: we never can tell to-day, what you will be to-morrow: and even you yourself do not seem to know what you will be hereafter.

Ans. Your objection is true, in a certain sense, but what then? My changes are not backward and forward; they are all in one direction. I do not first become a Teetotaler, and then go to drink again: I do not give up smoking, and then take to the pipe again; I do not first plead for open Conferences, and then recant and plead for close ones; I do not one day object to human creeds, and then defend them: my changes are all onward. It is no fault to change, if a man do not change for the worse. I grant I have always been changing, ever since I was born, and that both in body and in soul. I was once but a little child; now I am near six feet high. I was once unable to speak; now I can both talk and write. The changes through which I have passed, since I first opened my eyes upon the light, are innumerable, and some of them have been very great ones too. And I expect to be always changing in this way; there can be nothing done without change. I was taught by my parents that it was absolutely necessary for every one to undergo great changes, if they would be truly happy. I have even heard it preached from the pulpit, that men should not rest until they were changed so thoroughly, as to become quite new creatures. And, indeed, I have heard it asserted by wise and good men, and I have many a time seen it in print, that after men have been made quite over again, and become entirely new creatures, they ought still to keep changing, growing in spiritual stature and energy all their life through. The Gospel is given to us on purpose to assist us in changing; and they who look into the Gospel as they ought, "behold as in a glass the glory of the Lord, and are *changed* into the same image from glory to glory, as by the spirit of the Lord."

It is not only Scriptural but Methodistical also to change: hence the beautiful lines of Wesley:

> "Changed from glory into glory,
> Till in heaven we take our place;
> There we cast our crowns before thee,
> Lost in wonder, love, and praise."

John Wesley acknowledged that he had changed so often and so much, that he had ceased, in one sense, to be himself; and he applies to himself the saying of a changeable man of ancient times, who said, *Ego non sum ego:* which, when interpreted, means, I have got so completely changed, that I am quite another person. And Wesley not only changed in himself, but he was perpetually changing with respect to his plans of doing good. At first he would preach only in a church; then he began to preach in the open air. At one time he would do nothing contrary to the rules of the established church; afterwards he cast the rules of the establishment aside as of no authority, when they clashed with his views of duty. At first he preached without forming societies; afterwards he saw his error in so doing, and to prevent the fruit of his labours from being lost, he gathered such as were awakened to the importance of religion, and were anxious to be saved, together, and encouraged them to meet together every week. And people brought the same charge against Wesley, that is brought against Evangelical reformers of the present day. They complained that he was always changing, and that there was no telling one day, what he would be the next. This was the objection which several brought forward in reference to the institution of the meetings just mentioned. "I do not understand this changing one thing after another continually," said the objectors. Wesley contended that "this continually changing one thing after another, was not a weakness or a fault, as they imagined, but a peculiar advantage. We are always open to instruction," said he, "willing to be wiser every day than we were before, and to change whatever we can change for the better." Wesley changed many a time after this, but his changes were generally in the right direction.

This objection about changing has been urged against all reformers. It was urged against Alexander Kilham, and his friends who co-operated with him were charged with being persons given to change. It was urged against Wyckliffe, and Huss, and Luther, and I have no doubt it has been urged against every other person that ever did any thing important towards improving the state of mankind, since the world began.

And as for the charge that I know not what I shall be hereafter, I plead guilty to that also: and I am not alone in my guilt. Hear what the Apostle John says: "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it *doth not yet appear what we shall be:* but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." In ancient days it used to be a virtue to change, and Christians were exhorted to grow up unto Christ their head in all things; and if people would but throw off the fetters of human creeds, and human traditions, and study the Gospel as they ought, *changing*, or to express the same thing in other words, *going on to perfection*, would be regarded as a virtue again. Neither we nor the world at large are so wise and good yet, that we need to be afraid of change. There must be a vast deal of changing yet, both in the church and in the world, before things are as they ought to be. And so far from being ashamed of the changes through which I have passed hitherto, I am resolved, by the help of God, to continue to change as long as I live, and to do what I can, that others may be changed also. Let the children of the night be afraid of changing; but let those who are of the day be like "the shining light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day."

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT PRAYER.

"Is any prayer acceptable to God, which is not the dictate of his own Spirit? If you mean by the *dictates* of the Spirit, his influences on the mind *to show* us our wants, and upon the heart *to make us desire* a supply of them; I answer, no; for a prayer which hath not, at least, the above-mentioned qualities, is only a vain babbling.

Does a believer always pray with the Spirit's assistance? Yes, when he prays *as a believer*, and not as a parrot; for at his lowest times, he has, *more* or *less*, a sight of his wants, and a desire to have them supplied; and this he could not have, did not the Spirit work upon his mind and heart."—*Fletcher.*

THE SLAVE; OR THE POWER OF TRUTH AND LOVE.

"Let it not be said, we can do nothing for the slave. We can do much. We have a power mightier than armies, the power of truth, of principle, of virtue, of right, of religion, of love. We have a power, which is growing with every advance of civilisation, before which the slave-trade has fallen, which is mitigating the sternest despotisms, which is spreading education through all ranks of society, which is bearing Christianity to the ends of the earth, which carries in itself the pledge of destruction to every institution which debases humanity. Who can measure the power of Christian philanthropy, of enlightened goodness, pouring itself forth in prayers and persuasions, from the press and pulpit, from the lips and hearts of devoted men, and more and more binding together the wise and good in the cause of their race? All other powers may fail. This must triumph. It is leagued with God's omnipotence. It is God himself acting in the hearts of his children. It has an ally in every conscience, in every human breast, in the wrong-doer himself. This spirit has but begun its work on earth. It is breathing itself more and more through literature, education, institutions, and opinion. Slavery cannot stand before it. Great moral principles, pure and generous sentiments, cannot be confined to this or that spot. They cannot be shut out by territorial lines, or local legislation. They are divine inspirations, and partake of the omnipresence of their Author. The deliberate, solemn conviction of good men through the world, that slavery is a grievous wrong to human nature, will make itself felt. To increase this moral power is every man's duty. To embody and express this great truth is in every man's power; and thus every man can do something to break the chain of the slave."

W. E. C.

GREAT PRINCIPLES.

A SOLEMN responsibility rests on those who devote themselves to the advocacy and propagation of great principles. Great principles are either great blessings, or great curses; they are either the source of unspeakable advantages, or the fruitful parents of tremendous evils. If they could be separated from their consequences, and received or rejected by themselves, the case would be widely different. But this is impossible. A great principle is like the first link in a large chain; you may not see one half of the links which compose that chain; but if you move the first link, you draw all the rest after it. So, when you plead for a great principle, you may not be able to see half way along the chain of consequences that depend upon it; but in proportion as the principle is received, all these consequences naturally follow; and you are as much responsible for them, as for the principle on which they depend. He who propagates great principles, is like the man that casts seed into the earth: it seems but a handful when it is buried beneath the soil; and it may appear, to a casual observer, as an operation of no very serious or important character. The man himself, perhaps, who scatters the seed, feels but little concern about it, and exercises no vigilance in ascertaining the quality of the seed he sows. And yet on the quality of that seed depends the quality of the next year's harvest. If the seed be genuine and good, a rich, full harvest may be expected to reward the husbandman's toil, and to furnish seed for the following year. But should the seed be spurious, mixed, or defective, so will the crop be also; and he who thought that he had only sowed good seed in his field, to his astonishment may find that tares grow up among the wheat. Nor is this the worst. The tares grow more rapidly, and multiply more abundantly than the wheat; and, in spite of all his care, the ensuing year, the husbandman finds that it was easier to fill the soil with weeds than it is to get rid of them. So the man who delivers a lecture, or writes a book, to unfold and advocate a great principle, is sowing seed. Men's minds are his field, and sentiments are the seed he sows. It may seem, to lookers on, to be a trifling employment in which he is engaged, and he himself may not be sufficiently aware of its importance, or sufficiently cautious as to the tendency of the views he propagates. But he is really exerting an influence of the most powerful character; and, be it for good or for evil, that influence will be both seen and felt after many days. The sentiments he avows become the topics of thought, of reasoning, of conversation. They may not produce great effects immediately; the seed must have time to germinate. But by and by the effects appear. It is found that his views have been silently and almost insensibly working their way in people's minds; and now they are seen moulding the affections and regulating the conduct of multitudes. Some more powerful mind than his by whom the great principle was broached at first, takes it up, and follows it out to its legitimate results; and the multitudes who have embraced the principle, and submitted to its influence, perceiving the close and intimate connection with those other principles that depend upon it, embrace those other principles as well. The man who wrote the book, or delivered the lecture, had never contemplated such results as these, perhaps; and yet he is plainly responsible for all the consequences that flow, legitimately, from the principle he inculcates, as well as for that principle itself. If those consequences are good, to him are the human family indebted for their acquaintance with them; and if those consequences are evil, on him rests the responsibility of sowing seed that naturally produces so pernicious a harvest.

Very few men contemplate a great principle in all its bearings, and anticipate the whole of its results, either when they embrace it themselves, or when they begin to inculcate it on others. We have not held such a principle long, before we discover that it applies to a great number of things, which we never imagined before would have been influenced by it in the least. In its application to those things, it assumes an aspect in which we had never viewed it, and leads to conclusions of which we never dreamed when we embraced the principle. But *now* we suppose that we have considered the subject in all its bearings, and begin to declare our views to others. But we have not done this a great number of times, before some skilful, far-sighted antagonist inquires, "And what do you think of your principle applied to such a case?" We are, for the moment, perhaps, confounded. This is a case that we had never once considered; and, in its application to a case like this, the principle which has hitherto seemed manifestly true, leads to consequences at which we almost tremble. Well, we re-examine the subject; we find, perhaps, that the consequences which our opponent charges on the principle that we advocate, do not fairly flow from it, or that, fairly proceeding from it, they are as little to be dreaded as the principle itself, and once more we feel our minds at rest upon the subject. But still we are not aware of the extent to which the great principle may be carried; and possibly, after we have slumbered in the tomb for hundreds of years, some master mind may discover that this principle legitimately applies to a whole class of subjects, on which it sheds a flood of light, explaining mysteries, detecting errors, harmonizing truths, astonishing some minds, and grieving others; filling some with rage and disappointment, and transporting others with extacies of joy.

In short, to be acquainted with all the bearings, and apprized of all the consequences of the great principle, we must be acquainted with universal truth; for all great principles are closely connected together; the contemplation and reception of one, naturally leading to the knowledge and reception of all others.

The above remarks are intended to impress on our minds two important lessons. That we should diligently, patiently, and thoroughly consider great principles, before we embrace them; and that, having deliberately embraced a principle, after mature examination, we ought not to be startled if we find it leading us to conclusions that we did not at first anticipate. He who embraces and propagates principles without deep, diligent, patient, prayerful consideration, is like a man who sets a machine in motion, without acquainting himself either with its powers or its design; we need not be surprised if he becomes the author of extensive mischief, both to himself and to his fellow-men. While he who starts aside from the legitimate consequences of a principle, of the truth of which he is thoroughly assured, is like a man who engages a guide (of whose integrity and skill he is thoroughly satisfied) to conduct him through a country with which he is not acquainted himself, and yet starts back and trembles, because he finds that in some places the road is more difficult and dangerous than he had foreseen. We should never embrace a principle, till we are satisfied that it neither contradicts itself nor any other ascertained truth; but when we *are* satisfied that a principle is in harmony with itself, and with all the other truths at the knowledge of which we have arrived by the study of God's word, we need not be alarmed at its consequences, however they may clash with our own prejudices, or with the prejudices of our fellow-men. No reformers, perhaps, except one, have been able to foresee all the probable results of their principles, and most of them have been startled more or less when they have begun to perceive them. The apostles of our Lord little thought, for a length of time, that the truths which they proclaimed were intended to undermine and supersede the whole Mosaic economy. And yet such was the case, and such was the effect of their labours. When Luther and his fellow-helpers embraced the principle that it is the duty of Christians to obey God rather than man, and that every Christian ought to judge for himself what God requires, they were not aware of the consequences to which the principle would lead. When Wesley and his helpers laid down that same principle as the fundamental principle of Methodism, and as the principle by which all the deliberations and movements of Methodist Conferences should be regulated, *they* were not aware to what consequences it would lead. And the founders of many other religious denominations also appear to have been ignorant of the consequences of the principle. Luther saw clearly enough that it would destroy the power of the Pope and of councils, but he does not appear to have seen that it would require *him* to refuse to exercise authority and power over the minds of men. Wesley and his helpers saw that the principle would destroy the authority of bishops and convocations; but they do not appear to have been aware that it would require them to refrain from binding their own sentiments upon the souls that were converted under their ministry. When they began to see this, they all shrank back, renounced the very principle of their reforming movements, and went back to the old principle of spiritual despotism, which they had so long and so zealously laboured to destroy. And so it has been with most reformers. They all saw that they must be free themselves, but were afraid to follow out the principle to the conclusion that it was necessary that all others should be free. They saw that no one ought to have authority to dictate to them what they should believe or do; but were afraid to run on to the conclusion, that they themselves had no right to dictate to others what they should believe and do. All agreed in embracing a great, true principle, a principle on which they found themselves bound to act, if they would either be accepted of God, or useful to men; and yet, alas, such was their weakness and inconsistency, that they all agreed in setting themselves in opposition to the legitimate, the natural, the inevitable consequences of the principle. They all were convinced of the truth of the principle; they all saw the advantage and the necessity of acting on the principle up to a certain point; yet all were weak and foolish enough to tremble at the ulterior consequences of the principle, and inconsistently to shrink from them.

I fear that many who plead for the same principle in the present day, and who so clearly see the inconsistency of their predecessors, in not having carried it thoroughly out, will fall into the same inconsistency. They are still not aware, many of them, how far the principle, if clung to, will oblige them to go. They are not aware what a thorough transformation it will work in the arrangements and regulations of Christian churches, and what thorough havoc it will make of all sectarian idols. They are not aware how many peculiarities which are now adored, it will oblige them to regard as nothing; they are not aware how many things which would now be regarded as utterly intolerable, it will oblige them to do. When they do come to see the principle in all its remoter bearings, they will, we fear, either renounce it altogether, or they will do as their forerunners did; they will say, We will have the springing fountain, but we will not have the stream; we will have the fire, but we will have no burning.

We have a woeful example of this kind of inconsistency in the American republic. They laid down the principle that all have equal rights, —that no man has a right to be a tyrant, and that every man has a right to be free. But look at them a little after, and what do you see? Those very men who, just now, would have it that all men have equal rights, when they find that the principle requires them to give freedom to their brethren of colour, start, shrink back, turn round, and fly in the face of the very principle of their own freedom and independence. And at this day, the people who have filled the earth with their boasting of liberty, are the greatest despots, the most extravagant, the most barefaced, the most impudent, the most violent, the most intolerant, the most cruel, and the most unrelenting and implacable slaveholders in the civilized world. Their inconsistency is the bye-word of all nations, whithersoever the story of their doings is known.

We have seen the same thing take place on a smaller scale, in religious matters. We have seen a denomination, basing itself on the principle of unrestricted liberty as taught in the Gospel, and on the doctrine that the Scriptures are a perfect rule both of faith and practice, turn round, and contend for strict and absolute uniformity of opinion and practice, even on matters ceremonial, and require unreserved subjection to its principal officials in all things. We have seen a denomination that has boasted of liberty, and exclaimed against spiritual despotism beyond all others, for nearly half a century, run back headlong into all the black and horrible extravagances of the darkest and most intolerant ages, as if driven mad by the appearance of the harmless but unwelcome consequences of their boasted liberty.

Against these grievous inconsistencies we would have our readers to be on their guard. We would have them, when they have discovered a truth, to hold it fast, and act upon it in all things, whatever the results may be. We would not have them to be hasty or rash in the application of principles; but we would not have them to shrink from the proper application of a true principle, because it may lead to painful consequences, or because it may require a fresh modification of their plans or proceedings. We would have them as severe in trying principles, and as careful in applying them, as need be; but we would have them to trust in God, to have confidence in truth, to be firm and resolute in what is right. We would have them to be as considerate, and prayerful, and prudent as possible; but we would have them to possess a holy courage and daring, and we would have them to reckon it the truest prudence to abide in all things by the truth as it is in Jesus.

An inflexible adherence to truth and righteousness, the bold and resolute carrying out of great principles, will frequently expose you to reproach, and derision, and persecution,—it will frequently cause your friends to fall off, and it may sometimes cause you to be left entirely alone,—but be not alarmed. While you have truth and God on your side, you are mightier than the whole world. The Apostle Paul once stood alone: "At my first asswer, no man stood by me:" but he did not stand alone to the end: it was not long before it was said, "All Asia is gone after him." Stand to the truth, and though you may have to stand alone for a time, the whole world will come round you in the end. Fear nothing, so long as you have truth and God on your side. The Apostles, and those to whom they preached, were terribly alarmed, when they discovered that the tendency of the principles they had embraced, led to the abrogation of the Mosaical economy, but they still went forward, and neither the one nor the other sustained any loss or injury thereby. It will be so with us, if we imitate their example. Let us exercise so much patience, humility, diligence, and prayer, as not to mistake specious error for solid truth; but having ascertained the truth, let us fearlessly follow where it leads the way. LET US PROVE ALL THINGS, AND HOLD FAST THAT WHICH IS GOOD.

POLITICS.

THERE are no commands in the New Testament addressed to kings or magistrates, any more than to soldiers: did Christ go on the supposition that none of his disciples would ever be kings or magistrates? Did he go on the supposition that if kings and magistrates embraced his religion, they would be led to lay aside their earthly power, and, like other Christians, use no power but that of truth and love? Did Christ intend that his disciples should leave the politics of the world to worldlings, and employ themselves in doing good in some such way as he himself pursued? Did he intend to have his people a kingdom to themselves, ruled by no king but himself, and known to each other only as brethren, as fellow-subjects to himself? Did he intend to redeem us out of the world, and to employ us, not in working the machinery of worldly politics, but in drawing men away from all earthly systems, and, by bringing the whole world to act on the pure principles of the Gospel, render the cumbrous and cruel machinery of earthly politics unnecessary? There appears to me to be more in the religion of Christ, than some of its disciples are aware. Depend upon it, there are still hidden in the Gospel, some very important treasures of wisdom. What sort of a world should we have, if all should embrace the religion of Christ? Would there be any kings or magistrates? What would kings or magistrates have to do? Who would choose them? Who would want them? Would any Christian make himself into a king or magistrate? That could not be. It seems manifest to me, that the religion of Christ is intended to bring about a state of society, in which kings and magistrates shall have no existence whatever. It seems plain to me, that Christ never intended his disciples to be kings or magistrates, or any thing else but plain good people, living, talking, and labouring for the good of mankind in some such way as that in which he himself talked, and lived, and laboured. It seems to me that Christians are out of their place in holding power of any description, except such power as Christ himself and his Apostles used, the power to benefit men by teaching them truth, and turning them to God. It seems to be intimated in Daniel ii. 34—44, as well as in other parts of the Sacred Writings, that the religion of Christ is intended to break in pieces and consume all forms of worldly power and rule, and become itself the ruler over all the earth. But we may say more on this subject hereafter.

THE BEST PREPARATION FOR USEFULNESS.

THE letter, from which the following is extracted, was received some time ago by a young man who was very desirous to be engaged in extensive labours for the reformation of the church and the salvation of the world, but who was afraid that he was not sufficiently prepared for such public exertions by a knowledge of logic, rhetoric, grammar, history, natural philosophy, the philosophy of the mind, and other similar branches of science. He wrote to a friend expressing the views and feelings just stated, and the following was his friend's reply to that part of his communication. The views unfolded are of considerable importance: and as there are doubtless others, who feel similar difficulties to those which exercised the mind of the young man to whom the letter was addressed, it is judged advisable to give those views publicity, by inserting them in the *Investigator*:—

"MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,

"I believe you are more concerned respecting your want of an extensive acquaintance with different branches of science than you need to be. A general knowledge of natural philosophy is not necessary to fit us for the work in which we are engaged. A knowledge of the human mind is the most important branch of knowledge, next to a knowledge of religion itself, but even this is not so necessary as you might suppose. I have studied this branch of science rather attentively, and perhaps I understand the subject tolerably: but what is the service it renders me? It has taught me nothing but what is included in a knowledge of religion, and it has fitted me for nothing great and good, but what religion, fully interwoven into my soul and character, would have fitted me for without such knowledge. The true philosophy of the human mind is diffused through the whole book of God, and interwoven into Christianity in all its perfection; and when you are fully instructed in the religion of Christ, and when your soul is fully under its influence, and when you act in full accordance with the principles and spirit of Christianity, then have you within you, without knowing it, the whole science of the philosophy of the mind, and then do you act in such a way as a good man or an angel of God would act, who fully understood the philosophy of the human mind in all its perfection. I have read of a man who was astonished, when he heard the word *prose* explained, to find, that he had been talking *prose* all his life, without knowing it: and your case would be a good deal like the case of that poor man, if you were to be put suddenly in possession of a full knowledge of the philosophy of the human mind: you would discover, to your astonishment, that in receiving the truth of the Gospel, in cultivating its spirit, and in reducing to practice its principles, you had just been learning the philosophy of the human mind, and acting upon its principles, ever since you became a Christian. It is with the philosophy of the mind, and logic, and rhetoric, as it is with grammar. A man reared from his birth in a society where every one spoke grammatically, would have the whole system of grammar woven into his soul. Grammar only classifies words, and tells you how the fashionable or the major part of people use them. Grammar was, therefore, spoken and written, before it was formed into a system. The best works that were ever written, were written by men that did not know grammar, and many of them were written before any treatise on grammar was in existence. And so with logic and rhetoric, and the whole system of mental philosophy, on which the true arts of logic and rhetoric are grounded. Close, and honest, and patient thinkers, have always been good logicians; and men that have known and loved the truth, and that have had a respect to the will of God and to the good of mankind, have always been good rhetoricians. That is, those who have piously and faithfully sought after important truth, have always become wise, and clever men, according to their dispensation, and have been able to detect the errors of their times, and rise above them: and those who have been desirous to see the truth prevail, and who have revered the truth, and loved mankind, and, under the influence of those holy feelings, have laboured to instruct and reform mankind, have always been enabled so to speak and write as to engage the attention of men, communicate truth to their minds, and persuade them, as far as they would allow themselves to be persuaded, to follow that which was good. The principal lesson which I have learned from all the books on the philosophy of the human mind, and from all the treatises on logic, rhetoric, *Belles Lettres*, and the Sublime and Beautiful that I have read, has been this, that the essence and the elements, the light and moving spirit of all, are included in the religion of Heaven, and that the man who well understands and simply and fully believes the revelations of Heaven, and confidently, and boldly, and unreservedly, and constantly acts upon the principles of the Gospel, is philosopher, logician, and rhetorician, all in one. He does all that logic, rhetoric, and philosophy could enable any man to do. I see clearly enough, that if I had trusted God, if I had yielded myself fully to the influence of religion, if I had always acted in accordance with those indications of what is right and fit with which, from the time of my conversion to God, I was favoured by God, I might have been doing all the time of my religious life, what I was learning to do in the study of logic, rhetoric, and philosophy. The reason why Israel had to wander forty years in the wilderness was, because they had not yet learned in all things to trust in God and do his will: and the reason why I have had to wander for so many years through the wilderness of philosophy, and logic, and rhetoric, has been the same: it was because of my unbelief. I might have been living in the full light of heavenly truth; I might have been in the enjoyment of the richest delights; I might have been useful in spreading light, and chasing darkness, and promoting the revival of pure religion through the whole course of my religious career. I had as clear and distinct perceptions of what was right and wrong, in many things, seventeen years ago, when I had nothing to teach me but the plain oracles of God, and that holy unction which, like a kind of instinct, seemed ready, with its help and suggestions, at all times, as I am beginning to have now, after having wandered through a world of books, and a world of painful studies. The only true philosophy, the only true wisdom, is the religion of Jesus Christ. This is the fulness of all that is great, and noble, and good. After having wandered round the world, and met in many places with great, and good, and pleasing things, I have come back to the religion of Christ, and I find all here. O how I lament the unfaithfulness of my soul, which appears to have hindered me of much, for so long a time, from serving as I ought and might have done, the interests of religion. Still I cannot say but God has brought good out of evil in a great measure, and he has certainly mixed much mercy in all his dispensations towards me. And it is certain that I am at present fitted for certain kinds of usefulness for which, without having travelled through so many regions of thought, I might not have been fitted. Still it cannot be God's will that all should come to a knowledge of truth, and acquire ability for usefulness, in the same way in which I have come to my present knowledge and abilities. God's first plan was, that man should know only good, and that he should enjoy his felicity in full reliance upon God alone, and in full, implicit submission to his will. But man would know both good and evil: he would learn for himself what was good, by experiments of his own making, and he had bitterly to lament his choice. So with me; when I was converted I was created anew, and in a sort of innocent and childlike state, in full dependence on God, and in humble submission to his will, I knew only good: but I proved unfaithful to God; I doubted the all-sufficiency of God, and distrusted the completeness of religion; and I gave way to the world and the flesh, and I have been now for a long time wandering in the mixed world of good and evil, and by a knowledge of evil and of vanity, have been learning the truth which God would have taught me in a shorter way, namely, that the fear of the Lord is the true wisdom,—that one thing only is needful,—that all that there is of good in the creature, is to be found in God in all its perfection,—that God's declarations can never be too fully confided in,—that his precepts can never be too strictly followed,—that to know God's word, is the true philosophy,—that to do it, is the true and only wisdom,—and that to declare his word with the utmost simplicity and becoming solemnity, and to appeal for its truth and excellency chiefly to that of God in man, which is the witness of its divinity, illustrating and enforcing all by that meekness, and patience, and full submission to the will of God, which were so wonderfully exemplified in the character of Jesus Christ, are the true, the best, the most efficient means of regenerating and blessing the whole world. I can hardly describe to you what a feeling of distaste I have for almost all those things of which you speak as so necessary to fit you for those labours in which God has called you to engage. I have no hatred to those branches of knowledge, and to those arts which have been founded upon them; but I have no relish for them; I look on them as matters of very little worth or excellence indeed. And when I find Rhetoric and Logic mentioned in Conference resolutions, and when I find attractive forms of speech and modes of address, &c., spoken of as matters of importance to preachers in such a document as that of Ford's letter, I feel as if religion was dishonoured, and as if the parties who so speak, had either fallen from heaven to earth, or never been raised from earth to heaven.

And then as to Polemical divinity, that is a world of darkness and confusion indeed; and it is a world that appears to have no bounds. I went a great way into that world, and I wandered up and down in it a long time, but what good I found in it I cannot exactly tell. I believe I lost a deal of time in wading through controversies, and I believe I suffered something in my temper; and I am persuaded that my comfortable confidence in the Gospel of Christ, and my perceptions of its simple truth and excellency suffered also: but still I have probably some advantages over those who have not gone through those fields of strife. But I could not advise any one to read a lot of controversial writings. The best controversial writings that I have met with, or rather, perhaps, I ought to say, the better sort, such as Baxter's, Fletcher's, and Wesley's, are far from being so rich and plentiful in holy instruction, as religious books ought to be; while the worse or common kind of controversial works on Divinity, I mean the works on controverted points between sect and sect, and man and man, are generally calculated to produce any effect, rather than to give light and love to the soul of man. I give it as my belief, that if you never look into a controversial work as long as you live, I mean one of the common kind of controversial works, you will never be any worse for it, but perhaps better. Besides, most of the old controversies about religion are now out of date,—and will, very probably, never be revived in this country. Nor will many of them, in my opinion, be much agitated in other countries.—The controversies that will have to agitate the church for the future, will be chiefly controversies of another character; controversies concerning the practical principles of religion chiefly. The great controversy will have to be, whether God shall be obeyed or not? Whether God or man shall be governor on earth? whether the Gospel of Christ, or the inclinations of the flesh, shall be the rule of man's conduct. Heretofore, professors of religion have, in a great measure, kept this question out of sight, by keeping a perpetual uproar about matters of speculation; but, henceforth, they will have to discuss it thoroughly. I would, therefore, suggest to you, that you should make it your principal endeavour to obtain a clear, and comprehensive, and familiar knowledge of what God has revealed in the sacred oracles. Try to ascertain what God would have his people to be, and what he would have them to do. Learn, then, rightly to understand and feel the solemn truths which are employed in Scripture, to enforce the law of Christ. Then try to apply all the principles of Gospel truth and duty to every case of error, ignorance, and sin, that may present itself in the church and in the world, and try to set all right. Then see in what ways the principles of Gospel temperance and charity may be more variously, extensively, and vigorously carried out in practice by professors of religion. To this end, I should think it a good plan to note down your own thoughts, both on what you see among men, and on what you read in the Sacred Scriptures; thus forming two commentaries, each reflecting light upon the other, and both together surrounding you with a world of light. Then communicate to others the light which you thus obtain, and if the dark world will admit the light, all is well; and if it will not, then enter into controversy when you can no longer avoid it. Then comes the new controversy, which will have to engross the whole world, and which will have to divide the race of men into distinct and opposite parties. Then, also, may we hope to conduct controversy in another manner, from that in which religious controversies have hitherto been conducted. And then you will learn more of the philosophy of the human mind, and then you will better learn the true art of reasoning and persuasion in a few months, if you should prove faithful to the light and help that God would give you, than you would learn in colleges and schools, after the usual plan, in thirty years.

As to language, you understand it well already; much better than I did when I was four years older than you; and you need nothing to improve you in that, but such exercise as will necessarily come in your way in the discharge of your regular duties. As for history, there is not much history written yet, that deserves the name. The sacred history is almost the only history that fairly opens to you the secrets of providence, and illustrates the true principles of human nature. Church history is interesting and profitable, but it is exceedingly difficult to come at it; most of what goes for church history, is only a history of the political intrigues of selfish and ambitious pretenders. General history has some truth in it, but the *truest* historians are not now in print. Hume and Gibbon are as vile perverters of truth as well could be. But you may easily take a general view of history, such as may be requisite for you.—But history, also, is best studied in connection with one's labours in the cause of truth.

As for natural philosophy, you will learn a good deal of that in reading works on the Existence and Perfections of God, and other works on the Evidences of Religion generally. Then there are works on the seasons, and works of travels, which will gradually and almost imperceptibly furnish you with so much knowledge of God's works, as your labours will render necessary. But this will require no great deal of time; you will read those works as you travel by the way, and as a pleasing recreation between your more painful labours.

As for moral philosophy, which some mix up with the philosophy of the human mind, but which, in truth, is nothing else but the science of morals, you have the whole system in the book of God. Paley's moral philosophy partly makes plain the excellency of Gospel morality, and partly labours to obscure and discredit the Gospel principles. Dymond's is the best work on that subject, and Clarkson's Portraiture of Quakerism, perhaps, is the next, and then you have Baxter, Wesley, &c.

That part of history which will be most important for you and me, will be the history of the religion of Christ,—of Christian sects,—of good and great men, especially religious reformers, and the history of the present state of the world. In all these branches you know enough to begin with, and you will be obliged to learn more as you go forward with your labours. It is very likely that when we once get fairly engaged in the work of reformation, we shall have plenty to do; but still you will probably improve faster in all kinds of useful knowledge when you get fully engaged in lecturing, travelling, writing for the press, and corresponding, than you do at present. It has been so with me thus far; and I have no doubt it will be so with you. Trust in God, and all will be well. Just try to ascertain what is your duty for the present time, and do it faithfully, and all things will be made plain in their season. * * *

Yours,
Very respectfully and affectionately,
——

A JUST RETORT.

A poor West India negro, employed as a domestic in the house of his master, who had purchased him, having bought a trifling article of a fellow-negro, who had procured it by clandestine means, was detected with the property about him: and, therefore, ordered by his master to be very severely whipped. After he had received the punishment, he said to the officer who inflicted it, "why you no flog white man?" "So we do," answered the officer, "when they buy stolen goods, knowing them to be stolen." The negro replied, "there stand my massa; why you no flog him, as you flog poor me? He buy me; he know me stole."

CAUSES OF LUKEWARMNESS,—
CONTINUED.

7. ALL excess of earthly affections causes lukewarmness. The soul cannot hold two great passions at the same time. There must be some one object to which the soul must give its preference, on which it must place its tenderest regards, and to which all its desires, and purposes, and plans, must tend. There must be some one thing which the soul must regard as its joy, its God, its all, and to which all things else must be regarded as secondary and subservient. The soul cannot divide itself; it can have but one ruler, but one God. We cannot serve God and mammon; we cannot love the world and love the Father; we cannot have our hearts both in earth and in heaven. If we would love God truly, we must love him "with all our heart;" if we would truly love Christ, we must love him above father, or mother, or brother, or sister, or husband, or wife, or child, or friend, or property, or life. There is no way, therefore, to keep alive religion in the soul, but by giving it the preference in all things, and making it our all. There is no way by which we can maintain in our souls a fervour of holy love to God and man, but by keeping down all other affections, and having them all in subjection. God must be our great, our only end, and every thing else must be loved, and prized, and revered in subordination, and in subservience to him. Selfishness must utterly expire, and all our earthly pleasures, profits, friendships, all that would enflame our souls with selfish passion, must be presented as a sacrifice to God. We may love our wives, our children, our parents, and our friends, but we must love them in subordination to God. We may prize our liberty, our good name, our homes, and our influence, but we must prize them in subservience to God's will. All that we love, must be loved within such bounds, that God may be loved most, and loved with all the heart. And the indulgence of any affection at variance with love to God,—the indulgence of any affection which requires us, in any case, to set God aside, and to act in opposition to the revelations of his will,—any affection which stops short of God, which does not run forward through its object and mount up to God,—every affection which does not harmonize with love to God, which does not mingle with, and form part of it, as brooks and smaller streams form parts of the rivers into which they run,—every such affection tends to destroy our love to God, and, in proportion as it is cherished, necessarily brings us into a state of lukewarmness. All undue power given to any earthly or carnal affection, is so much taken from the power and fervour of our heavenly affections. All love of wealth, all love of fame, all love of power, except such love as leads us to use those things, or relinquish them, as the interests of God's cause, and the welfare of our fellow-men may require, tends directly to quench our love to God and to our fellow-men, and to dull our sensibilities with respect to things spiritual and eternal. So it is with all excessive or selfish affection for our friends or kindred, for our liberty or lives. The moment we begin to look on God as less than ALL,—the moment we begin to feel and act as if there were some security, or some enjoyment in any thing apart from God,—the moment we begin to regard or use the creature, as if it were any thing more or better than that which God's mere will or blessing makes it,—the moment we allow a feeling to arise within us, as if God were not our All-sufficient portion,—that moment we become idolators,—that moment we worship the creature instead of the Creator,—that moment we cast earth and water over the fire of the altar, and if we do not extinguish it, we abate the fervour and the flame. God will be all or nothing; and if we will not love him, and trust him, and serve him as our all in all, we must forego his favour, and sink down into a languishing, lukewarm, and miserable state. This, I have no doubt, is one great cause of the lukewarmness of the present day. People will have their idols; things which they love apart from God; things with which they will not part for God, or for the good of their fellow-men. They do not make the glory of God, and the good of their fellow-men, their sole end and business. They love themselves first, and God

the second. They have corners in their hearts into which they will not allow God to enter; they have their hidden chambers, which they keep close to all but their idols. They love the world. Some love dress and ornaments; some love large and magnificent houses, and costly furniture; some make an idol of books and learning; some love money, and lay it by as their hope and confidence against the time to come. The idols of men are innumerable. The ways in which people try to keep back part of their hearts from God, and to reconcile selfishness and piety, the love of the world, and the love of the Father, are almost infinite. But it cannot be. All such efforts must end in disappointment and misery. If men would enjoy religion,—if they would be truly and fully alive to God and to the world unseen, they must cease their strife, and give up themselves and all they have to God without reserve. Then, when we make God our all, and open to him our whole soul,—when we can say with the Psalmist, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? And there is none upon earth that I desire beside Thee: Thou shalt guide me by *thy* counsel, and afterward receive me to glory;" then God will pour out his spirit upon us in such measures, that there shall scarce be room to receive it; we shall be "filled with all the fulness of God."

8. All opposition to what we believe to be our duty, tends to bring us into a state of lukewarmness. The life and fervour of our souls come from God's spirit, and every violation of our sense of duty grieves God's spirit, and causes Him to withdraw his gracious influences. Whenever we neglect a duty, or go in opposition to what we believe God requires of us, we damp our spiritual fervour. Frosts are not more ruinous to tender leaves and blossoms, than sin to holy affections. If we would be truly and properly alive to God, we must obey conscience in all things. If we believe a thing to be our duty, we must *do* it: if we believe a thing to be a sin, we must shun it: and if on any matter we be in doubt, we must look honestly and prayerfully for fuller light. We must do nothing against our conscience. To go against our conscience is to go against our God. We ought not, for all the world, to do a thing until we are satisfied that it is right. Profit, and honour, and power may seem to be in favour of a violation of conscience, but we must not regard them. Fashion, and custom, and friends, may plead with us against conscience, but we must not hearken to them. A strict regard to conscience may appear likely to involve us in difficulty and trouble; but we must not shrink. Our conscience may clash with the laws of the nation, and with what are called the laws of fashion, the laws of honour, or the laws of the church; but we must still go forward, obeying its dictates in all things. Neither friends nor foes, neither the hope of gain, nor the fear of loss, neither the love of life, nor the dread of death, must be allowed to move us, to go in opposition to our convictions of duty in any thing whatever. When friends advise us, we may hear what they have to say in favour of their counsel; when difficulties or doubts present themselves, it is right that we should consider well what God would have us to do; but we ought not, when we have ascertained God's will, to turn from it either to the right hand or to the left, on any account whatever. Advice, entreaty, tears; opinions and resolutions of majorities, threatenings and promises, should not be put into the scale for one moment against a sense of duty. If we allow *any* consideration to induce us to act contrary to our belief of what is right and wrong, we cut off our souls from the fountain of life and of love at once; and as branches, when cut off from their parent stock, wither and die, so our souls, when cut off from God, lose all their life and power, and sink down into a state of languishing and death.

To this sacrificing of conscience to earthly and selfish considerations, may be attributed no small share of that lukewarmness that at the present day prevails among the professed disciples of Christ. Men find that if they would carry out their views of what is right, they must make serious sacrifices, and run great risks. They see that if they would do nothing but what they believe to be in accordance with the Gospel, they must be reproached, and persecuted, and deprived of the means of earning their bread. They find that a strict regard to the requirements of the Gospel is likely to offend their employers, their connections in trade, their friends and acquaintance; and to cause them to be regarded as eccentric, fanatical, or mad. They find that a strict regard to conscience is likely to cause differences between them and their religious friends, and subject them, in consequence of the prevalence of intolerance, perhaps, to church censure, and excommunication. And when they see these things, they hesitate, they shrink, and allow themselves to be carried away by the force of temptation. They prefer gain, to righteousness; and the praise of men, to the honour that cometh from God. They conform to customs which they believe to be wrong, and swerve from what they believe to be required of them by God. They believe it to be wrong for women professing godliness to adorn themselves with gold, or silver, with feathers, or flowers, or costly apparel, and yet they indulge themselves in these things. They believe it to be wrong to lay up for themselves treasures on earth, or to be anxious about what they shall eat, or drink, or what they shall put on; and yet they refuse to give up laying up treasures for themselves on earth,—they are not willing to cast their care on God. They believe they do wrong in sitting in the public-house, in drinking intoxicating drink, and in using intoxicating drugs; but they are still unwilling to break loose from their foolish and mischievous habits. They follow trades which they cannot approve, which they cannot reconcile with their views of Christian duty; they buy, and sell, and manufacture things, which they know to be useless or mischievous; or they act on principles, and imitate customs in business, which they believe the Gospel condemns. They believe it to be wrong to pass their evenings in playing at chess, or draughts, or in idle talk with conversation cards, and yet continue to go into company where these things are practised, and continue, against their consciences, to take part in them. In short, they do not act according to their light,—they violate their sense of duty, and they receive the reward of their unfaithfulness, in leanness and languishing of soul. If we would be alive,—if we would have our souls fired with holy zeal for God, and for the welfare of mankind,—if we would live above the world,—if we would have power in prayer,—if we would have duty a delight, and find our labours in the cause of God and human happiness as pleasant as our necessary food, we must consult the will of God in all things: we must ask, in all things, Lord, What wouldst thou have me to do? And having once ascertained what it is that God requires at our hands, we must obey him without hesitation or fear.

9. Another frequent cause of lukewarmness, is needless and forbidden association with ungodly persons. We are commanded, by the Apostle, not to be unequally yoked together with unbelievers: "For what fellowship," says he, "hath righteousness with unrighteousness? or what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? or what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? For ye are the temple of the living God: as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them,—and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore, come out from among them, and be ye separate, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." Our very acceptance with God therefore, and of course our prosperity in religion, is made to depend on our being separate from the ungodly. The Redeemer has set us an example of this separation from the ungodly: "He was holy, and harmless," says the Epistle to the Hebrews, "separate from sin and sinners." He formed his church on this principle of separation from the world: his disciples were to be a people to themselves, a kingdom not of this world, a city set on a hill; and the Redeemer, when speaking to his disciples, tells them, "Ye are not of the world; I have chosen you out of the world." It is the appoint-

ment of God, then, that his people should keep themselves separate from the world; that they should be a people, a kingdom, a world to themselves. We are not forbidden to live in the same country, or in the same house, with worldly people; we are not forbidden to work in the same shop with them, or to attend the same market with them; but we are not to be *yoked* with them. We are not to make them our companions,—we are not to take them for our husbands or wives,—we are not to receive them into our fellowship, nor to yoke ourselves in fellowship with them. The saints are to be our companions and friends, and with them, and with the Saviour only, are we to yoke ourselves. The reason is assigned by the Apostle; he reminds us that there is no agreement, no concord, no sameness of views and feelings, of objects and pursuits, between the ungodly and the followers of Christ; that they are absolute opposites to each other; and he would have us to understand that it is impossible for us to be yoked with unbelievers, without giving up our principles, and falling away from God.

The union of God's people with the ungodly world was forbidden under the Old Testament dispensation, and much the same reason was assigned for the prohibition then, as is assigned for it now; it was said that such a union would lead the people of God into idolatry and apostacy. And so it is; the Christian that needlessly associates with ungodly persons,—the Christian that yokes himself with them,—is in the direct and certain way to ruin. Unless he free himself—unless he come out from among them and be separate, he will inevitably lose his religious fervency, and become a miserable and apostate castaway.

This has been the result of this forbidden association of God's people with the ungodly, from the beginning. It is to this that the declension of religion before the flood is attributed. To this the corruption of the Children of Israel is attributed, in the twenty-fifth of Numbers. The corruption of the Children of Israel, so bitterly deplored by Nehemiah, is attributed to the same cause, as is also the apostacy of Solomon. It is the natural tendency of needless association with ungodly persons to corrupt the people of God. The first act of association is itself the beginning of corruption, and the continuance of the association is inevitable destruction.

Where is the man that has made the terrible experiment, without suffering loss? There are few professors of religion, perhaps, who have not, on some occasion, in some form or other, left his high station to ally himself, or yoke himself, with unbelievers; but where is the man that hath done it without injury? There is no such man to be found.

I regard this needless association or alliance of God's people with people of the world, as one of the principal causes of the present lukewarm and deplorable state of the church. In some cases ungodly persons are admitted into the church; and in cases innumerable we see the professed followers of Christ entering into fellowship with the ungodly. In loan funds, building societies, commercial partnerships, banking companies, railway companies, benefit societies, political unions, trades unions, secret orders, and in numerous other societies of various descriptions, we see professors of religion yoking themselves together with unbelievers, by thousands and tens of thousands. The evil has become so common, that many seem not to regard it as an evil. The consequence is, that the church is reduced almost to a level with the world; the life and power of godliness are almost gone, and there is comparatively little but lukewarmness and the profession of godliness remaining. And until professors come out from the ungodly, and be separate,—until they draw out their necks from every yoke but the yoke of Christ, and league themselves with their fellow-Christians only,—until they become "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people," there is no likelihood that the state of things will ever be any better. My dear friends, if you would retain your spiritual fervour, keep your own place. Instead of needlessly associating with a corrupt world, let your associates be the followers of Christ alone. Break loose from every society but such as are founded on

Christian principles, and consist of Christian men. Break loose from all authority and every law, but the authority and law of Jesus Christ. Be free; and, under Christ, be your own masters. Regard the will and votes of men as nothing, when they clash with your own convictions of duty. Tie yourselves to no one; commit your interests to no one, but God and his people. Be kind to all men, and, as you have opportunity, do good to all; but *yoke* yourselves with none but such as bear the yoke of Christ.

10. Another cause of lukewarmness is neglect of prayer. "Christ spake a parable to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint." We are commanded to "pray without ceasing;" and "in every thing, by prayer, and supplication, with thanksgiving, to let our requests be made known unto God." And we have every encouragement to expect, when we pray aright, that our prayers shall be answered.—"Ask, and ye shall receive," said the Saviour, "seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." "If ye abide in me, and my word abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." "He that spared not his own son," says the Apostle, "but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" We know that prayer *alone* will not secure the blessings we need; but prayer in conjunction with those other things which are required of us, will secure every thing. And one reason why so many members of the church are so low and languishing is, that they are not "instant in prayer." They read a little, it may be, and they hear sermons, and they sometimes bow their knees perhaps; but they do not pray. They do not ponder the importance of eternal things; they do not consider their wants; they do not feel their dependence on God; and when they present themselves before God, their worship is little better than a cold, unfeeling form. There is no earnestness in their prayers—no holy importunity. They talk to God as though he heard them not, and ask for blessings as though they needed them not. Their devotions are not so much a holy, solemn intercourse with God, as the performance of a cheerless task. It is to this want of daily, ceaseless, earnest prayer, that the lukewarmness of many is to be attributed.

> "Prayer is the Christian's vital breath,
> The Christian's native air."

We may as well expect to live without breathing, as to prosper in religion without prayer. If we would abound in love to God and love to man, prayer must be mingled with all we do; it must be interwoven with our very being. Prayer should be mixed with our reading, and hearing, and studying. In going into company, and in returning to our habitation; in our lying down, and in our rising up; in all our plans and undertakings, and in all our difficulties and discouragements, in all our afflictions and temptations, we should make known our requests unto God by prayer.

11. Another cause of lukewarmness is a want of intercourse with God's people. "It is not good for man to be alone." He languishes and degenerates altogether without society. And the society of saints is almost as necessary to the comfort and welfare of saints, as the society of men is to the comfort and welfare of men. The social principle remains much the same after conversion as before. The Christian *must* have intercourse with his fellow-Christians, if it be in his power, or he will inevitably decline in piety. If there were no Christians within his reach; if he were placed in a desert land, or shut up alone in a dungeon, the case would be different; God might then be expected, by special helps and blessings, to make up for his lack of society: but when Christians have the opportunity of holding intercourse with each other, it is their duty to avail themselves of the opportunity, and if they neglect to do so, they have reason to expect that their souls will decline in spiritual life and vigour. It was plainly the intention of the Saviour, that his disciples should meet together, if there were but two or three of them; and his disciples did meet together from the first. The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews admonishes them "not to forsake the assembling of themselves to-

gether." Christians cannot refuse or neglect to have fellowship, or hold religious intercourse with each other, without sustaining serious loss. And yet many professors of religion do neglect to improve their opportunities of holding intercourse with each other. In some churches the members do not profess to meet together more than once a month, except when they meet in company with the public generally to hear their ministers. And even those monthly meetings are but indifferently attended; great numbers neglect them altogether. The members of some churches profess to meet in classes once a week, in love feasts once a quarter of a year, and in other meetings occasionally; but vast numbers of them are very irregular in their attendance, and many do not attend any of these meetings for months or years perhaps together. It is impossible that their souls should thrive, while they do thus. The ancient Christians used to meet every morning, and for a long time many of them devoted two whole days to intercourse with each other, and to labours of benevolence. The early Methodists used to meet every morning, besides meeting almost every evening of the week as well. If churches would be cured of their lukewarmness, they must do something towards reviving this primitive practice. It is not likely that our love to each other should be ardent, when we do not know each other; when we scarce ever interchange a kind or pious sentiment with each other. And if we, as individuals, would avoid lukewarmness, we must find out some godly friends, with whom we can hold Christian communion at least once or twice a week. We must have religious friends with whom we can meet to read, and converse, and pray; from whom we can ask counsel, and receive instruction, reproof, and consolation. If churches would be cured of their lukewarmness, they ought to begin afresh, on some such plan as that which prevailed among the early Christians. If the fire is to burn as it ought, the scattered cinders must be re-collected. If the body is to be in health and vigour, the members must be properly united. It is as certainly the duty of Christians that they be joined to each other, as to be joined to their head, and it is as needful to their spiritual welfare.

11. There are many imperfections in the regulations of churches, which are very unfriendly to the maintenance of ardent piety in the members. The meetings of Christians are too stiff, too formal; and the exercises of the meetings are too much confined to one individual. The services, so called, are too formal. The singing is often any thing rather than the solemn, spiritual worship of God. Christians should meet more as equals, as brethren and sisters, as children of the same family. They should meet together more frequently among themselves, and their intercourse should be of a more free, more friendly, more familiar kind.—There should not be disorder; but there should be liberty. Nor do we plead for disputation, but there should be an affectionate interchange of sentiment, a kind familiar conversation. One might read a psalm, a hymn, or a passage from a useful book; another might communicate information respecting the spread of the truth; a third might give an exhortation; others might propose questions and give answers, and others might engage in prayer.—Such meetings as are described in 1st Cor. 14, are wanted, and must be had if the lukewarmness of professing Christians is to be cured.

12. Lukewarmness is frequently caused by people going to excess in business. It is very difficult for persons to engage in business at the present day, without getting drawn on beyond their proper measure.—Great numbers of our men of business are so involved at this hour, that they know not what to do. They can scarce think of any thing, or talk of any thing, or attend to any thing, but trade. Bargains, and debts, and mills, and factories, and gains and losses, and bills and orders, and markets and news, are running through their souls almost continually. They can hardly sleep at night for thinking of their business, and if they kneel down to pray, they think more of their accounts and commercial transactions, than of their God and their souls. And when they come to the chapel, they find it easier to run over the affairs

of their trade, than to join in the worship of God, and in the application of Divine truth to their consciences. Some of them are losing in business, and they are distracted with anxiety and grief; others are gaining, and they are ensnared and lost amidst the pleasing excitement of prosperity. Few of them have time to attend to the interests of the church, or to any plans or labours of charity; and fewer still have their hearts free enough to enter into any scheme of benevolent operation, with becoming zeal and energy. It is not possible that souls should thrive in religion, while surfeited with the cares of business in this way. If Christians would not be lukewarm in religion, they must be more moderate in their pursuit of business.—They must not be so eager to engage in trade; and when they do engage in it, they should move slowly and surely. They should know where to stop. They should shun those branches of business, and those plans of carrying on business, which are attended with peculiar risk. Risk all you have for God, but risk nothing, much less more than your all, for the mere prospect of gain. Do business for God; consider yourselves as employed by God, and as answerable for nothing more than you are able to do without neglecting other parts of the work which he has assigned you. What you risk, risk for God; what you gain, employ for God; and what you lose, set down as lost for God. Measure your movements by God's law; measure your desires and aims by a reference to his glory; have no interests but God's, and you may then cast all your care on him. You may thus have your hearts free, and your spirits fervent, while your hands are busy: your business will thus become a part of your religion, and its engagements, instead of separating you from God, and cooling your spiritual ardour, will bring you nearer to God, and become profitable and invigorating exercises of every holy affection.

13. Lukewarmness may result from the abounding of iniquity. It is said by the Saviour, when referring to the period of one of his visitations: "Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold." It is hard for a man to retain a clear perception of religious truth and duty, and an ardent love to God and goodness, where profligacy and infidelity abound on every hand. It is difficult to go against both wind and tide; especially when the wind is a ceaseless unabating gale, and when the tide is aided by a mountain flood. All things are possible with God, and if God should call his people to go into a scene of wide-spread, universal darkness and profligacy, he would give them help accordingly, and his grace would be sufficient for them; but it would still be a fearful and a painful trial. But when people place themselves in such circumstances, without a call from God, their ruin is almost sure. Those, therefore, that visit scenes of abounding wickedness, that place their habitations in countries overrun with idolatry, superstition, infidelity, and licentiousness, for the sake of worldly gain; or that place themselves in the midst of such powerful and dangerous influences for the sake of pleasure, have no right to expect any thing else, but that they will suffer loss in their souls, and probably fall utterly away from God. We ought, therefore, never to place ourselves in a family, a workshop, or a country where religion is disregarded, and where iniquity abounds, without a special call from God, without a full conviction that it is our duty.—If we are placed in such a situation, we ought to do our utmost to bring our neighbours to a sense of their duty, and to lessen the prevalence of sin. We ought to be doubly careful not needlessly to associate ourselves with the profane, but to keep ourselves to ourselves, entirely free.—We ought to expect persecution, and be constantly prepared for insults, injuries, or death. We should live as martyrs, as always delivered unto death for the sake of Christ.—We should keep in the closest fellowship with God, and seek his aid and guidance every moment.

14. Another cause of lukewarmness in professors of religion, is the want of proper exercise; the neglect to labour in the cause of God and human happiness. Exercise is as necessary to the health and vigour of the body, as food is. And it is the same with the soul. If the soul is to be kept properly alive, it must

not only be well fed with spiritual food, but regularly exercised in doing good. All holy affections increase in strength by being exercised. The more we do for God, the more do we increase in love to God; and the more we labour for the welfare of mankind, the more we increase in love to mankind. If a person, after he is converted, does not begin to do something for God, and continue doing something, he will be sure to lose his first love, and become lukewarm. If Christians would not lose their love and zeal, they must bestir themselves; they must use their talents for God; they must do good as they have opportunity unto all men, especially to the household of faith. They must consider themselves as the stewards of God, as the appointed benefactors and regenerators of mankind, as created anew by Christ Jesus for this very end, that they might be zealous of good works. Doing good must be the end and business of their lives. Their wealth, their knowledge, their health and strength, must all be regarded as the Lord's, and be diligently used in his cause. Nothing else can secure the continual blessing of God; nothing else can keep alive in the soul the love of God and the love of man. If we bury any of our talents, or employ them for selfish purposes,—if, instead of following the example of the Saviour, we indulge ourselves in idleness or extravagance, our love will be sure to decline, and our souls cannot fail to become lukewarm.—The acquisition of religious knowledge, is like heaping on the fire fresh fuel; labouring for God, is like rousing the fire, and making the fuel burn. The acquisition of religious knowledge is like taking food, and labouring for God is that exercise by which digestion is promoted, and fresh life and energy diffused through the whole soul.

There may be many particular things which have a tendency to cause lukewarmness, besides those mentioned in this and the preceding article, but those which we have mentioned are the principal ones that have been presented to our mind.—What other causes of lukewarmness there are, may be also reduced to one or other of the heads which we have mentioned, so that those who will watch and guard against the causes enumerated, will be enabled not only to hold fast what they have attained, but to go on to perfection. We would conclude this article, by urging our friends to guard against the dangers we have mentioned, and to seek, by a diligent improvement of all the means of grace with which they are favoured, to grow up into Christ their head in all things. It is high time the church was revived, and why should not the revival of the church begin with us? If we are grieved for the deplorable state of the church,—if we sigh and cry on account of abounding iniquity,—if we are truly desirous of a reformation of the church, and of the conversion of the world, let us seek first to be thoroughly reformed ourselves. Let us seek to be filled with light, and love, and power, and let us endeavour to be examples of zeal, and diligence, and spiritual mindedness, to all around. It is possible for us to be as holy, as devoted, as single-minded, as zealous, and as happy as the Apostle Paul: why should we be content with less? Let us give ourselves to God without reserve; let us labour in his cause with all our souls; let us labour to know and do the whole will of God, that we may answer the great end of our redemption by Christ Jesus, and be brought at last to enjoy the fulness of eternal blessedness in heaven for ever and ever.

WHERE THERE IS A WILL, THERE IS A WAY.

This old English proverb, though subject to some exceptions, is frequently illustrated in the conduct of mankind. The following anecdote may be regarded as a specimen. On a Saturday night, some time since, a poor man went into a bookseller's shop in London. "I come," said he, "to ask what may seem very unreasonable: I am very poor, I cannot buy a Bible, nor can I leave the value of one. Will you trust my honesty, and lend me one till Monday morning? I will return it faithfully." The bookseller consented; and at the appointed time it was returned, with many expressions of gratitude. He afterwards came regularly for it; and as regularly returned it. A person, who heard of the circumstance, desired the bookseller to give him a Bible, and place it to his account. When he returned to ask the usual indulgence, and found that he had a Bible of his own, the poor man was in a transport of joy, imploring many blessings upon the head of his unknown benefactor; declaring that it was a treasure he never expected to possess! If such laudable zeal for the accumulation of religious knowledge were to become general, what a blessed change would be speedily effected. And if such a spirit of disinterested benevolence were to be constantly practised, we might soon anticipate the period, when the moral wilderness shall become a fruitful field, and the desert shall blossom as the rose.

SHAKESPEARE;

OR,

A KNOWLEDGE OF HUMAN NATURE, ETC.

Newcastle, Oct. 14, 1841.

Mr. Editor,

I will thank you to inform me, through the medium of your *Investigator*, if you consider the works of our great dramatist, Shakespeare, may be read with propriety by Christians.

Trusting you will excuse this freedom,

Your's, &c.,

JOHN KIRTON.

Ans. 1. Perhaps there may be cases in which it would be proper for a Christian to read the works of Shakespeare; I cannot tell; but if there be such cases, they are, in my judgment, very rare. If a Christian were writing a work for the instruction of his brethren, and was called upon to give his opinion on the subject of reading plays, it might be proper for him to look into Shakespeare's works, in order that he might be the better qualified to give advice on the subject. But this would be but a rare case. If I were asked whether it would be proper for Christians to read the works of such men as T. Paine, R. Carlile, and R. Owen, I should say, that it would not be proper for Christians generally to read the works of such men; but that still there might be cases in which it would be proper for a Christian to read them. The works of such men might come to be very widely circulated, and multitudes of young and unthinking people might be misled by their false representations of things; and it might be necessary for some one or more to read them, in order that they might be able to refute their false representations of things, and so prevent their fellowmen from being led astray by them. In such cases, it may be proper for a man to read such books, but for Christians generally to read them, would, in my judgment, be as improper as it would be for persons generally to feed on poison. And the same remarks apply, in general, to the works of Shakespeare. There may be cases in which it would be proper for a Christian to read them, or, at least, to read so much of them as might be necessary to enable him to form a judgment of their character and tendency; but I should give it as my judgment, that it would not be proper at all for Christians generally to read them, nor for any Christian to read them, except for such objects as the one already named.

What other objects are there for which Christians could properly read them? I know none. It may be said, that they contain a great deal of important information; but the same information may be found in other works, and that in greater purity and fulness. If Shakespeare's works were the only works within one's reach, from which information on certain important matters could be obtained, it might be proper enough for Christians to read them then; but that is not the case. The information to be gathered from Shakespeare respecting the history of our country, the manners, and customs, and tastes of former times, and the working of the human passions, may all be obtained from other sources, and that to far greater advantage than from him. As for history, ancient manners, customs, and tastes, no one will deny, I suppose, but that there are works far better adapted to give us correct and full information on those subjects, than the works of Shakespeare. The principal thing in which Shakespeare is generally supposed to excel, is his striking revelations of human nature, his correct descriptions of the workings of the human heart. He is called the "Poet of Nature," and he is spoken of as unfolding and exhibiting the great principles of human nature, in a manner superior to that in which they are unfolded and exhibited by any other writer. Even Adam Clarke himself calls him "The Poet of Nature," says he was acquainted with all the workings of the human heart,—that his equal in describing the inward workings of the human heart, in all varieties of character and circumstances, has never appeared, either in ancient or modern times, and even represents those who have not read his works, as being in their nonage.

It is principally for the knowledge of human nature which they are calculated to give, that the works of Shakespeare are recommended by such men as Adam Clarke.

The manner in which Adam Clarke speaks of Shakespeare appears to me to be calculated seriously to mislead; and his strong recommendation of his writings to the perusal of men, and Christians generally, I cannot but consider as exceedingly unguarded. Shakespeare does not deserve the high commendations passed upon him. He does not deserve to be called "The Poet of Nature." He was *not* acquainted with all the workings of the human heart,—he has *not* described the inward workings of the human heart in all varieties of character and circumstances. He was not acquainted with one hundredth part of all the workings of the human heart. There are mysteries in the workings of the human heart with which neither Shakespeare nor Adam Clarke were ever acquainted. There are depths of deceit in the human heart with which none, but the All-knowing one, is acquainted. And as for describing the workings of the human heart, in all varieties of character and circumstances, he has done no such thing. He has not described the workings of the human heart in one-thousandth of the varieties of character and circumstances existing in the world. Such declarations respecting the writings of Shakespeare are almost infinitely extravagant. When Adam Clarke uttered them, he knew not what he said.

Besides, if Shakespeare had understood all the workings of the human heart, and if he had given a description of its workings more correct and full than any other description of the kind, what then? Would it follow that it would be well for Christians to read his description? I think not. What *are* the workings of the human heart in its unregenerate state? It was said at one period of the history of man, that "God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." Suppose some ancient poet of nature had given us an exact description of the workings of the depraved human heart in all the varieties of character and circumstances existing in the world before the flood; what sort of a book would it have been? Suppose he had chosen but a hundred of the wealthy profligates and blasphemers of the antedeluvian race, and had revealed to us, in all their horrible impiousness and loathsomeness, the hidden workings of their depraved hearts; what good end would such a book have been likely to answer? Would such a knowledge of human nature, as such a book would be likely to communicate, do much good? Would such a book be fit to be recommended to the perusal of Christian men and women? I think not. Suppose a man to have as correct and as comprehensive a knowledge of the inward workings of the human heart as Satan himself, and suppose him to embody the whole in a long enchanting poem; what effect would you expect it to have upon a Christian reader? What effect would it be likely to have upon a young convert, and a young person? Suppose all the hearts whose workings were described, to be the hearts of licentious, drunken, covetous, and unbelieving men;—suppose the man who gives the description to be himself a drunken, licentious, covetous, ungodly man;—suppose the object of the man in giving this description of the workings of the human heart to be, not to do good, but only to please corrupt men, and to obtain for himself riches and fame; what then would be your expectations respecting the influence of the book? You would expect its influence to be bad; you would expect it to carry along with it the infection of sin and death.

And such, in a great measure, is the case with the works of Shakespeare. There is almost every thing in the works of Shakespeare to render them unfit for the general perusal of Christians. In the first place, nearly all the characters in Shakespeare's works are earthly, carnal, ungodly characters. His principal characters are frequently persons of the most vicious and villainous description imaginable. The best of his leading characters are of a low and mixed description; characters in which there is little or nothing of high and thorough-going virtue,—in which a little Jewish or heathenish virtue is mixed with a great amount of weakness, folly, and ungodliness. There is not a truly Christian character in the whole of his writings. The workings of the human heart described in his works, are therefore little else but the workings of earthliness, carnality, and sin. The knowledge of human nature which they give you, therefore, is very little more than a knowledge of evil. The deeds which you see, and the conversation which you hear, as you go through the works, are very little else but various modifications of wickedness and folly. The author introduces you into the corrupt and infectious society of courts and of brothels, of taverns and of gambling houses, and familiarizes you with the dark deeds and filthy conversation of harlots, bawds, thieves, murderers, and workers of every kind of abomination. You hear nothing of God, of Christ, of heaven; or if you hear them, you hear them mentioned in such unhappy connections, mixed with such a vast amount of filth and folly, that they only tend to make the evil influence mightier. You meet with no such workings of the human heart as are calculated to awaken in your soul a hatred to sin, and a love to God and goodness. You meet with no true penitents, no saints, no honourable sufferers for the truth, no great philanthropists, no virtue struggling amidst the trials of reproach and want, triumphing over temptation, and rising, after its last conflicts, to the regions of light and glory. The world through which he leads his readers, is the old degenerate world,—the regions of the shadow of death,—"the world that lieth in wickedness." The human nature which he reveals to you, is human nature in its ruins, polluted, perverted, undone. A few brief and transitory notices of imperfect virtue are given, it is true, but they amount to nothing, compared with the immense mass of unmixed evil which continually forces itself on your attention. You may judge for yourself what effect such representations of human nature are calculated to produce on the minds of Christian readers. For myself, I should expect a vast amount of evil to flow from the general study and contemplation of such exhibitions of humanity.

Besides, the exhibitions which Shakespeare gives of human nature are not correct: they are partial. He does not represent things fairly: he does not exhibit the whole of a subject. He shows you Falstaff full of wit and mirth in company; but he does not show you Falstaff when alone, sighing and sad, dejected, distracted, miserable, and mad, as every drinking, laughing, merry sinner generally is when alone. He shows you Falstaff boasting, and lying, but he does not show you Falstaff writhing under the reproaches of conscience, and tormented with the consciousness of his own baseness and folly. He shows you Falstaff in his drunkenness and debaucheries; but he does not show you him groaning and howling under the loathsome and horrible effects of his excesses. He shows you sin and its pleasures in fairer colours than they deserve; but he keeps out of sight the fruits of sin. The pains of body, and the pangs of soul; the restless nights, the gloomy days, the loathsome diseases, the broken-hearted wives, the ruined families, the reproaches of conscience, the shame, the fear, the horrors which attend a life of sin, and the worm that dieth not, the fire that is not quenched, the blackness and darkness, the weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth which follow it in the eternal world, he scarce ever attempts to unfold at all. He shows you but one side of the sinner's heart, but one side of the sinner's lot, and but one small period of the sinner's existence.

And his representations generally are thus partial and delusive. His representations of courts and camps, of the life of a soldier, the life of a courtier, the life of a shepherd, and the life of an outlaw, are all false. He represents nothing fairly. His pictures have truth in them, I grant, but it is truth so separated from its kindred truth, as to have the effect of falsehood; it is truth presented to the mind in the same form as the devil is accustomed to present it, in order to deceive and destroy. The man that describes the rose, should mention its thorns; the man that describes the bee, should mention its sting; the man that describes the serpent, should mention its fangs and its venom, if he would be faithful to truth. If he tells you of the beauty and fragrance of the rose, and never mentions its thorns,—if he speaks of the honey which the bee collects, and says nothing of its sting,—if he describes the beauty of the serpent, and is silent respecting its fangs and venom, he is a deceiver, a liar, a betrayer, and a murderer. And this is the case with Shakespeare. He gives you a measure of truth on almost every subject on which he writes, but he does not give you the whole truth: he withholds that portion of truth, without which the truth which he presents is more deceitful and dangerous, than unmixed falsehood.

I say the devil employs truth in this way. It was truth that he employed when he tempted the Saviour in the wilderness; the truth of revelation itself. Nearly all the temptations with which he labours to deceive us, and destroy us, are made up of truth. When he speaks to the young of the pleasures and ecstacies of forbidden love,—when he speaks to the adventurer of the glories of war,—when he speaks to the merchant of the power of wealth,—and when he speaks to them all of the strictness of religion, of the difficulties and pain of self-denial, it may be nearly all true; but it is not the whole of the truth. It is truth abused and perverted; it is truth made into a lie. And such are the writings of Shakespeare; they are truth perverted; truth made into a lie; truth so presented as to be rendered a thousand fold more dangerous and deadly, than unmixed falsehood. Forbidden love has something else besides pleasures and extacies; it has jealousies, and fears, and many watchings,—it has disappointments, and quarrels,—it has separations, long absence, and desertions,—it has tremblings, and pantings, and many groans,—it has anguish, and gloom, and melancholy, —it has tears, and sobs, and shrieks, —it has a pang where more than madness lies, the worm that will not sleep, and never dies,—it has shame, and guilt, and degradation,—it has broken hearts, and ruined reputations, and incurable, unutterable wretchedness,—it has loathsome diseases, and ruined constitutions, and wasted fortunes,—it has madness, and murders, and the curse of God, and miseries without bounds, and without end. So with the life of a soldier: it has its glory, such as it is, it is true; but it has something else besides glory. It has slavery, and vice,—it has hardships, and privations,—it has dangers, and wounds, and death,—it has a world of crimes and horrors. And so with all other forms of vice: they have their dark sides, as well as their bright ones; their torments, as well as their pleasures; and the darkness and the torments form the principal part of the whole.

And religion has not only its self-denial, and temptations, and tears; it has innumerable, unspeakable, and eternal pleasures. It has peace of conscience, and peace with God,—it has the pleasures of holy knowledge, and the delights of heavenly love,—it has the assurance of God's favour, and free access to his throne,—it has freedom from the fear of death and hell, and from all consuming cares,—it has the pleasures of health, and the consolations of sickness,—it has freedom, and confidence, and self-control,—it has the pleasures of temperance, and purity, and beneficence, and all the pleasures of high and holy friendship. It has all that can give to men true worth, or dignity,—all that can give true peace and joy,—all that can sweeten life, all that can lessen the bitterness of death, and all that can contribute to our blessedness and glory in the eternal world. Its tears, and conflicts, and triumphs, are as nothing compared with its joys and blessedness. And he, who, when he professes to give you a correct and faithful representation of these things,—presents them on one side only,—he who, when he speaks of sin, tells only of its pleasures, and who, when he speaks of religion, tells only of its restraints and self-denials, is a deceiver, a liar, a betrayer, and a murderer. And such is the case with Satan; and such, in a great measure, is the case with Shakespeare.

But many things which Shakespeare says, are altogether false.—His sentiments, on many subjects, are absolutely erroneous. He frequently puts darkness for light, and light for darkness; calls evil good, and good evil. He speaks of good things, disrespectfully, and of bad things, favourably. He represents virtues, as vices; and vices, as virtues. He speaks of some of the most serious and mischievous crimes, as if they were but trifles, or things purely harmless. Besides an infinity of foolish talking and jesting, which, however, regarded by men, are, nevertheless, inconsistent with the profession of Christianity, he has abundance of filthy, licentious conversation. Then lying, and cheating, and fornication, and adultery, and murder, are all represented either as no evils at all, or as evils of no great moment. Characters are recommended to our admiration, which are directly opposite to what is required by the Gospel; and all the arts and powers of poetry are employed, to present that which is earthly, sensual, and devilish, in tolerable and engaging forms. The whole impression likely to be made on the mind by the perusal of Shakespeare, is opposite to the impression which the Gospel would have to be made on our minds.

Again, Shakespeare was himself a corrupt bad man. He was a fornicator, and a thief, and it does not appear that he ever repented of his crimes. His occupation was one of the most vicious and degrading in existence, and the whole tenour of his writings proves that he was the miserable slave of sin. And what can be expected from a man of a depraved character?

Again, Shakespeare never appears to have had any design to do good by his writings. He does not appear to have had the least idea that he was under any obligation to do good; and if he *had* any such idea, he does not appear to have regarded it. His object in writing appears to have been nothing else, than to obtain wealth and honour, by gratifying the corrupt passions and vitiated tastes of men.

In short; the character and tendency of his writings from beginning to end are evil. They are calculated to mislead and pervert the mind: they are calculated to fill the soul with false notions, and filthy images, to awaken unholy feelings, and to cherish vicious passions, and to make men fruitful in every kind of foolish conversation, and ungodly deed.

The sum of what I have said is, that Shakespeare has not correctly described the inward workings of the human heart, in every variety of character and circumstances,—that he passes by the most important and interesting workings of the human heart,—that his works are not calculated therefore to give us a correct knowledge of human nature,—that almost the only workings of the human heart which he describes, are the evil workings of the unregenerate heart,—that a full knowledge of the evil workings of the unregenerate hearts of men is not the knowledge which men generally require,—that his representations of human life, and of the workings of the human heart are partial and deceitful,—that others of his representations are altogether false,—that he was not himself a good man,—that he did not write for a good end, and that the whole tendency of his writings is to mislead, to corrupt, and to destroy.

(To be continued.)

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THE

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THE NEXT STEP.—A REASON FOR THE HOPE THAT IS IN US.

Whilst sowing the seeds of Evangelical Reform, we are met, very frequently, by the following question:—"What you say appears to be true and scriptural, and, were it all reduced to practice, would doubtless introduce a happier and holier state of things, but is it practicable? What reason have you for hoping for success?" We wish to give an answer to this question. We wish to render a reason for the hope that is in us. And we also wish to point out to our friends what appears to us to be the only additional thing now wanting, in order to secure that success for which we hope, and earnestly to urge the necessity of *taking this next step.*

And first, in reply to the question, What are the grounds on which we cherish the expectation, that the broad and self-denying principles of the gospel of Christ will be reduced to practice? We reply, that these grounds are found in the three following considerations: 1st. The good seed of unmutilated gospel truth is rarely, if ever, sown in vain. 2nd. The same power which gave success to that truth, in primitive times, is promised by the Great Head of the Church to them that rightly ask it, and, consequently, all who desire that power may attain it; and, lastly, *the sure word of prophecy declares* that the Messiah shall subdue "even all things unto himself." The first and second of these considerations are already being confirmed by transpiring events. The good seed of undivided truth is not only being widely scattered, but is falling into good ground, and already cheering indications of an abundant harvest are to be discerned. The power from on high, also, already is being sought and found, by some.

"Lo the promise of a shower
"Drops already from above."

And the third consideration—the sure word of prophecy, is one to which we feel we shall "do well to take heed," until the day of universal righteousness and peace shall dawn.

2. We believe the only additional step now necessary to secure the complete and permanent success of those efforts which are now being made to lead men to become Christians altogether, is comprised in that final direction of our Lord and Master, "*Tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.*" This direction was given to the disciples, after their minds had been subjected to a long course of preparatory instruction. John the Baptist had taught, throughout the country, the nature of that penitential preparation which was meet for those who would enter the Messiah's kingdom. And our Lord himself had, during a period of three years, presented to their minds truth after truth, as they were able to

bear them. And now the preparatory teaching was completed, and only one thing more was needed —"the power from on high." Having acquired *knowledge*, the next step they were directed to take,---the only step then necessary to furnish them thoroughly unto every good work, was the acquisition of such spiritual *strength* as should be according to their day. Here then is the point of analogy between these primitive disciples, and all those who, in our degenerate age, are awaking to a clearer perception of their holy and exalted calling. God is giving to many a conviction, that whilst *experimental* religion has been taught and understood with some degree of clearness, there has been a fearful and fatal misapprehension as to *practical* religion. That the grand ruling principle of supreme love to our Creator, and equal love to our neighbour, whilst theoretically admitted, has been really denied. That even those who have acknowledged the obligation of devoting the whole man to God, and seeking His sole glory, by a life of effort to promote the holiness and happiness of His creatures,—that even these have sought to justify themselves in pursuing this world's honours, pleasures, power, and, above all, *its wealth.* God is giving to many a conviction of the utter fallacy and danger of these prevailing notions, and in connection with this conviction, He is exhibiting the plain, consistent, unsophisticated truth to the minds of men. Men are beginning to see that to "love their neighbour as themselves" implies something far more heavenly and *angelic* than is popularly imagined, or maintained. Men are beginning to see that many of the injunctions of Holy Scripture, which heretofore have been neglected, or looked upon as *figurative*, do in reality develope principles and rules of action, which should shape the entire of our external character, and make us live, not to ourselves as hitherto, but unto God. That the followers of Christ should, for themselves, seek temporal good only so far as to secure the greatest capability of useful labour and holy enterprise; and, having done this, should trust in Him that clothes the grass and feeds the ravens; and deem His promise their sufficient and unfailing refuge. God is teaching this to men; but it is hard to flesh and blood; and they ask, "Who can bear it?" They are like the disciples of old, they have some degree of *knowledge*, but they lack *the power*. The only thing they need now, is "*the power from on high.*" Without it, or without a larger measure than they now possess, they must remain unstable as water—they must be tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine, or of imagined difficulty. They will either not take up the self-destroying cross at all, or will faint beneath it. They will either be unwilling to put their hands to the plough, or having put their hands to it, they will "look back." Without this power, though they should gain all knowledge of their heavenly calling, they will be earthly still in their tempers and pursuits. But with this they shall be more than conquerors. Thus waiting on the Lord, they shall renew their strength, and, in that strength, arise, and go on their way rejoicing. They shall *do all things* whatsoever Christ commands, when strengthened by his might. They shall go from strength to strength, they shall run and not grow weary, they shall walk and never faint. *This* is that blessing which we must now seek to secure, and our success is certain. We must not content ourselves with pentecostal knowledge, we must gain pentecostal power. We must not only see what the primitive disciples of our Saviour did, but *how* they did it, and then we must do likewise. This, then, is the answer to such as ask, How shall these things be? This is the answer to such as seek to know how the degenerate church may recover its first purity and influence; and how men may be enabled to consecrate their all to God. This is the answer to such as wonder how the better era shall be ushered in. *This is the answer*, JUST AS AT THE FIRST. Men shall be taught their duty, and then seeking and obtaining "power from on high," shall do it. There shall be a diffusion of light, and then a copious supply of power. The light shines partially already, but we still need the full, efficient baptism of the Holy Ghost. This must now be our aim. To seek this must be our *next step*.

Every evangelical reformer should seek this earnestly, both for himself, and all his brethren. Every church should seek this very earnestly. We would say to all, "*Tarry ye, until ye be endued with power from on high.*" We mean not any indolent, inactive tarrying. The disciples, whose labours could not commence till the power from on high descended, did not *thus* tarry. They "all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication" until the day of Pentecost arrived. And so must we, if we obtain the power we seek. We must engage in *prayer*. We *all* must engage in *prayer*. We all must engage in prayer *with one accord*. We must join *supplication* with our prayer. We all must *continue* with one accord in prayer and supplication. And we must continue thus until *our day of Pentecost be fully come*. We must use every means. In our private devotions, at the family altar, at the class meeting, the prayer meeting, and in the great congregation, we must stir up ourselves to take hold of God. The conviction that he is a rewarder of them that *diligently* seek him, must call into action our utmost energies. The knowledge that then will He be found, when we seek Him with the whole heart, must make us willing to endure an agony of prayer. We must pray and never faint. We must *take the next step*. We must wait *thus:*

"Restless, resigned for thee I wait,
For this my vehement soul stands still.'

We must tarry *thus* until we be endued with power from on high.

3. We wish very affectionately and earnestly to urge this duty, by the following considerations. We say to our brethren,

"Tarry ye, thus, until ye be endued with power from on high," for *this, even this, is now your privilege*. If we are willing to do the whole will of God, there is no remaining obstacle. Nothing but the unfaithfulness of God's people has hitherto prevented the bestowment of overwhelming showers of heavenly influence. There is no reason for believing the church, even at this hour, is necessarily deprived of any of that great grace which was upon all the primitive believers. No! we may bring back those golden days, if we are willing to spend our lives in performing the golden deeds of those Christian MEN. If we will live their lives, we may have their grace. Friends! will you live their lives? Then you may attain the same degree of heavenly power. We know that many of you *are* willing; and we, therefore, say to you, *seize their power*. Seize it, it is your right, your own inalienable privilege. Take the next step. Say not that many in modern times have prayed for this in vain. Say not, this blessing is too great to be expected now. No! God has given His light, and He will not withhold His power. He is *striving*, even now, to show the morning light of a millenial day. Submit yourselves to him. Receive his strength. Welcome, oh, welcome to your souls the power from on high.

Tarry ye, thus, for *then all doubt and perplexity as to any part of your duty, whether towards God, or towards man, shall be removed*. For, when He, the Holy Ghost, whom, as the Spirit of Power, the Father shall send down more fully upon you, is come, he shall teach you all things, and shall bring all things whatsoever Christ requires of you, with divine clearness to your minds. And if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, He shall reveal even that unto you. If any man will do His will, he shall know of our doctrine, whether it be of God. Are you in doubt, then, as to what you ought to do, or what you should leave undone, here is the remedy, receive it thankfully, and live. Rest not without a full and satisfying measure of the unction of the Holiest, and you shall "know all things"—all things that pertain to life and godliness. Take the next step. In tarrying for greater power, you are tarrying for greater knowledge too.

Tarry ye, thus, for *then your providential way through life shall become distinct and plain*. Only take no rash, hasty, and unguarded step, but, before you determine so important an affair, be fully persuaded in your own mind. Only do this or tarry, as you are, until you be endued with power from on high, and every mist shall vanish, and you shall be enabled to decide aright, and to rejoice in the assurance that your Father, which is in heaven, looks down with approbation on the labours of your hands. Then shall a cheering light shine on your pathway through life's vale of tears. A voice shall woo you onwards, saying "This is the way, walk ye therein." You shall find, that great grace confers great peace; and the conviction, "what I do is right," shall sweeten all your toils. Take the next step—the happiest of your life.

Tarry ye, thus, for *then you shall attain to the full assurance of faith.* Whilst your faith is weak, and your graces languishing, this full assurance never can be yours. Whence those doubts? Whence that anxiety? Whence those misgivings? You know too little of the power from on high. Were you endued with it, as God designs you should be, you should have calmness, and serenity, and assurance for ever. You should then see through the dark valley. Though all your lifetime previously, you had been subject to bondage, through the fear of death, your bonds should then be broken. The Sun of Righteousness should rise within your soul, to set no more. The Spirit himself, should constantly bear witness with your spirit. No guilty fears, no gloomy meditations, no shy mistrust should then displease your Heavenly Father, nor afflict your heart. But if you rest beneath your privilege, the full assurance of faith will not be granted.

Tarry ye, thus, for *that heavenly power shall keep you in every hour of danger.* It is an error to suppose that greater grace requires greater anxiety and pains to *keep it.* The grace preserves the saint, and not the saint the grace. It is grace that "keeps our hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God." It is grace that must preserve us from falling. And the more we are endued with gracious power, the more secure we shall become. The nearer we approach to the holiness of God, by so much is our ultimate salvation nearer than when we first believed. Oh! tarry then, in earnest prayer and supplication, until ye be endued with power from on high. Take the next step. Thus, give all diligence to make your calling and salvation sure.

Tarry ye, thus, for *then you shall experience that your master's yoke is easy, and his burthen light.* Oh yes, when Christ resides within the soul of man, *self* dies, and the man *himself* henceforth lives not, but Christ doth live within, and He does all the work. That happy soul feels all its weary, useless labour ended; and thenceforth the Saviour, by the Spirit, executes his own commands. All; all is easy then. The *broadest* obligation ceases to oppress, and then to sacrifice an *Isaac*, would awaken no reluctance. Oh, tarry for this heavenly power! Take the next step.

Tarry ye, thus, for *then, whilst passing through some parched and weary region, the living water shall ever be within you—a source of never-failing hope and joy.* When your most fondly-cherished earthly hopes are blasted, while your continued toil seems vain and fruitless, when "hope deferred, maketh sick the heart," then shall "the well,"—the well of spiritual hope and blessedness send forth its streams and wash your soul from cares and fears. You shall "dwell in quiet habitations" then. And then, whenever you get weary in your master's work, or when, on contemplating the sad state of wickedness in which the world is found, your heart shrinks from the arduous task of its amelioration, and you are ready to conclude your efforts are in vain, *even then*, the mighty working of the Holy One within you shall subdue your doubts. Even then you shall feel fresh strength imparted, and you shall not grow weary in well-doing. No! you shall maintain your ground, though earth and hell obstruct the way. You shall run with patience the race that is set before you. You shall be stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord. You shall finish the work God hath given you to do, in his own exhaustless strength; and, notwithstanding all your moments of depression, and hours of almost hopeless toil, you shall "return with joy, bringing your sheaves with you." You *shall* reap, if you faint not, and if you gain the power from on high, you shall not faint. Labour on. Pray, weep, wrestle, strive, teach, warn, exhort, at all times, and everywhere. Be instant in season and out of season, and still, if ye be endued with power from on high, you shall not faint, nor shall you "be forgotten long." God is stronger than the world, and greater than the hearts of men. Even that most powerful of all powerful impediments to truth, "the love of money, the root of all evil," shall obstruct the progress of the truth no longer. Even evangelical reform shall not be found too arduous, when the power from on high descends. Take the next step. Tarry ye, thus, for *then you will have no wish to lay up treasures upon earth.* You will then know that those who do God's will, and those alone, secure a safe and certain refuge. You will no longer set at naught the wisdom from above, and act upon the maxims of earthly, foolish men. You will be *fools* no longer. You will bear in mind that lesson of your Saviour, "So is he (a *fool*) that layeth up treasure for himself on earth,"—when God may say, "This night thy soul shall be required of thee:" thou art not rich towards God, thou hast not made thy treasures thine own, by laying them up in heaven: "whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?" Then, when plenteous power from heaven descends upon you, these truths shall live within your hearts, and regulate your lives. You will not fear "a rainy day." You will trust in the Lord and do good, and so shall you dwell in the land, and *verily you shall be fed.* And meanwhile your heart shall stand fast; trusting in the Lord, you shall fear neither moth, nor rust, nor thieves, nor penury, nor want. *Your* treasure is secure. It is "laid up in heaven." Oh, wise, oh happy man!

> "How happy is the pilgrim's lot!
> How free from every anxious thought;
> From worldly hope and fear!"

Would you then, whilst, in accordance with your Saviour's command, you remain content with food and raiment, have a sure, unfailing refuge for the dark uncertain future, tarry ye, oh tarry ye, in earnest supplication, until ye be endued with power from on high. Lose not one moment. Awake, arise, cast off the deeds of darkness, and seek to be equipped with the whole armour of God's light. Take the next step.

Tarry ye, thus, for *then the inquiry after neglected truth which now appears so rapidly extending, shall become permanent and universal.* "If this counsel, or this work be of man, it shall come to nought." God grant it! "*But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it.*" Let, then, your conviction that all sincere ~~inquiries~~ after truth do come from God, and that such are your inquiries, inspire you with ardent, constant longings after the Almighty's blessing on your efforts. Only God can *carry on* the work which has commenced. Novelty cannot do *this.* Party zeal cannot effect it. Human strength and wisdom must soon fail. God must do it, or it will remain undone. But hath he said, and will he not do it? doth his promise fail? hath he forgotten to be gracious? is there no balm in Gilead, is there no physician there? shall the health of his people never be restored? That be far from him. He will avenge his own elect. He will hasten his universal kingdom. His word shall not return unto him void. The present movement shall secure his blessing. Hear ye his cheering voice. Speaking to his messengers of truth, he says, "Behold I send the promise of my Father upon you, tarry ye, until ye be endued with power from on high." Take the next step.

Tarry ye, thus, for *then the hindrances to genuine godliness shall be removed, and then we may expect the universal reign of righteousness, and peace, and joy.* What hinders this? "The Lord's arm is not shortened that it cannot save." What hinders this? "Neither is his ear heavy that it cannot hear." What hinders this? Not God, but man. "But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear." Remove the cause, and the effect shall cease. Say not the world is too far gone in wickedness. Is any thing too hard for God? Say not, men will not hear. "My word shall not return unto me void." Say not, we must wait God's time. His time is now. The hindrance, we repeat, is not in him, it is in ourselves. Say not, men are too ignorant, or too fast bound by worldly influences and prejudices. Teach them better notions, teach them "all things whatsoever" Christ commands. Say not, "there is too fearful a lack of principle among mankind." Strive, and work together with God, to impart that principle. Exemplify the whole round of primitive graces and virtues, and enforce all these as BINDING NOW upon all around you; and that you may do this, secure the power from on high, and the hindrances to truth shall hinder it no longer, the whole truth shall have free course, the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see the salvation of our God. Take the next step.

Tarry ye thus, for *then your efforts shall be, and shall be looked upon, as truly Catholic.* Without the power from on high in copious, pentecostal measures, you will exist only to swell the number of existing sects. But with it you will secure the sympathy of all good men, who gain a knowledge of our good ways. Principles like ours,—that every one that Christ receives should be received by all his followers,—that the church of Christ should and will become "one fold,"—that, as to temporal things, he that hath gathered most should have nothing over, and he that hath gathered little should experience no lack,—that Christianity may even now assume its entire and primitive character and influence—principles like these, if maintained among you by the power from on high, must extirpate, not foster, a sectarian spirit, or sectarian institutions. No! embrace these truths in the love thereof, and all the good that now is found throughout our evil world will soon be drawn together, and all the evil will soon be scattered to the winds, and driven away for ever. But men generally will not embrace them, in the love thereof, till strengthened by the power from on high. Neither shall we. If we would be catholic, then, —if we would have our controversies to be controversies for important and essential truth, rather than mere revivals of threadbare strifes respecting points of discipline, or respecting *nothing*, let us seek to be, and never rest till we are endued with power from on high. Who will call the man that loves his God, with all his heart and soul, and all his neighbours as himself, a sectary? Friends, the world is weary of sectarian strife, and should you engage in that, the world will turn away when you seek its attention,—it will be weary of you too. But it is not weary of beholding self-denying, loving, catholic labours to reform and bless it. Be it yours to gain the power from on high, and spend your lives in labours such as those, and you will not long be called *a sect.* Take the next step. Tarry ye, thus, for *half the difficulty to the church's reformation, and the world's salvation, so far as yourselves are concerned, is removed already.* The knowledge of an evil, surely, is half its cure. You know the evil, and you are convinced that to return, or to be earnestly desirous of returning to first works, is the only thing necessary in order to the recovery of first love. You know also what constitutes "first works," and wish to do them. Is not the hindrance half removed already? And shall we stay here? Shall we hesitate to *take the next step?* Oh, press forward. Push on your victory. Gain the power to walk in all well-pleasing. Tarry ye, in fervent expectation, and the remainder of the obstacles shall also be removed. Take the next step. And when the beam falls from your own eye, you shall *see clearly how to pull the mote out of the eyes of others;* and then *the world shall see.* Tarry ye, thus, and *then you shall avoid a fearfully aggravated condemnation.* For from him unto whom much is given, much shall be required; and who has had more than we have? Have we not all these sacred, vital truths which have secured, whenever they have been faithfully declared, the conversion of souls to God? Have we not more than these? Have we not reason to conclude that we have what many around us have not,—a definite knowledge how to act, and what to aim at, after conversion is experienced? How great then is our responsibility. Who can tell what vast and paramount interests depend upon the use we make of our increasing knowledge! Should we conceal our light, how terrible our doom! Of how much sorer punishment shall we be thought worthy, if, whilst we see the errors which exist around us, and which almost ruin those who live beneath their influence, we should neither avoid those errors ourselves, nor point them out to others. There is now only one way of escape for us. The light *has* come, and we *must* answer for its use, before assembled worlds. There is *now* only one way of safety, it is developed in the words "Tarry ye, until ye be endued with power from on high."

Friends, Brethren, think on these things, and seek, oh! seek that heavenly power. "He that shall come, will come, and shall not tarry." *Take the next step.* Remember that it is, even now, your privilege,—that when you attain it, all doubts as to any portion of your duty shall be removed,—that, then your providential way through life shall be made plain,—that, then you shall enjoy the full assurance of faith,—that, that heavenly power shall *keep you* from every evil,—that, then all your duties will be easy and delightful,—that, then, in all your moments of depression, the "living water" shall afford you speedy hope, and joy and strength,—that, then you will, whilst avoiding every prohibited refuge against temporal adversity, gain one of unfailing safety,—that, then the present efforts you are making to promote the truth shall become permanently successful,—that, then all the hindrances to Christianity among you shall be removed, and a prospect of its universal spread be opened,—that, then your efforts will be truly catholic, and destructive of sectarian strife,—that, half the difficulty is already gone,—that, then, and only then, you shall avoid a fearfully aggravated condemnation,—remember, we entreat you, all these things, and waste not one moment. Tarry ye, *one and all*, in earnest prayer and supplication, until ye be endued with power from on high. TAKE THE NEXT STEP.

ADDITIONAL OBSERVATIONS. TO THE EDITOR.

My Dear Friend.

I have been favoured with a perusal of the above article in manuscript, and whatever may be its effects on the minds of your readers generally, it has afforded to my mind uncommon satisfaction. May I crave your kind indulgence for the insertion of an additional statement or two on the same subject as the above? The immense importance of the theme will, I trust, as fully justify you in inserting, as I feel it does me in offering, the following remarks.

1. It must be plain to all who attentively consider the subject, that a much greater amount of spiritual influence is needed under the present dispensation than under any former dispensations of religion. Let any man compare the requirements of the Mosaic law with the requirements of the Gospel, and he will perceive that we need a larger measure of the Holy Spirit's influences to dispose and strengthen us to comply with those requirements, than was necessary to enable God's ancient people to yield obedience to the ancient law. Under that dispensation men were permitted to labour six days for themselves, and only required to consecrate the seventh to God; at least, with the addition of the time occupied in attending to those other festivals enjoined in the law of Moses. But in the Gospel, we are required to cease from our own works altogether, and to employ every part of every day in efforts to glorify God and promote the accomplishment of his gracious purposes. Whether we eat or drink, or whatever we do, we are required to do *all* to the glory of God. God's ancient people were permitted to amass wealth, and to transmit that wealth from generation to generation, while the principal part of what they were *distinctly* required to consecrate to God, was a *tenth* of their substance. In the Gospel we are required to hold *all* our property in trust for God, and to regard ourselves only as stewards of his manifold mercies. We are forbidden to lay up for ourselves treasures on earth, and commanded, *as we have opportunity*, to do good unto all men, and especially to the household of faith. Compliance with this requirement in all its exceeding breadth is made the test of our love to God, insomuch that the Apostle John inquires, Whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, *how dwelleth the love of God in him.*

Under the old dispensation, retaliation was allowed in cases of injury, and by application to the proper authorities a man, who could prove himself to be injured by another, might procure an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a breach for a breach; but the Gospel will not allow us to avenge ourselves; it requires us, on the contrary, to give place unto wrath. It forbids us to return evil for evil, and requires us to overcome evil with good. If any should sue thee at law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also; if he compel thee to go with him a mile, go with him twain, is the strange language in which the Gospel addresses us; and whatever this language may *not* imply, it certainly does imply thus much, that so far from a Christian resenting an insult or revenging an injury, he is to bless them that curse him, and by the performance of every act of kindness within his power, to heap coals of fire on his adversary's head, and leave the great Judge of all to plead the cause of the injured and oppressed. And when, in connection with precepts like these, we remember, that the Gospel asks no mere service of the outward life,—that it condemns as hypocritical and offensive, all outward obedience that does not spring from a heart governed by love to God and love to man:—that it penetrates beneath the surface of a man's behaviour, and requires singleness of eye, uprightness of motive, purity of heart; when we consider these things, I say we can scarcely fail to see, that to comply with Gospel requirements in the spirit as well as in the letter, we need a greater measure of the Holy Spirit's influences than was requisite under former dispensations of religion: verily we *need* to be endued with power from on high.

2. Not only do we *need* a more plentiful effusion of the Holy Spirit than God's ancient people; but a more plentiful effusion of the Spirit is promised to us. Take in connection the following passages, and you will see this clearly. "Until the spirit be poured upon us from on high, and the wilderness be a fruitful field, and the fruitful field be counted for a forest." Isaiah xxxii. 15. "And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: and also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit." Joel ii. 28, 29. "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance; but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear; he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost." Mat. iii. 11. "In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the Scriptures hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. Thus spake he of the spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified." John vii. 37–39. "Nevertheless I tell you the truth; it is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the comforter will not come unto you: but if I depart, I will send him unto you." John xvi. 7. "And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high." Luke xxiv. 49. Let these passages be considered in connection with each other, and in connection with many other passages of like import, and it will be sufficiently obvious that while the character of the dispensation under which we live, renders increased measures of spiritual influence necessary, those measures of spiritual influence are plainly, distinctly, and repeatedly promised. So true is this that the economy under which we live is styled in Scripture, "the ministration of the spirit."

3. To encourage us to rely on these promises and expect their speedy and complete fulfilment, we have a brighter and more glorious display of the infinite love of God, than was vouchsafed to any under former dispensations. The proofs of the Divine regard with which patriarchs and prophets were favoured, were neither few nor trifling. The whole history of the Jewish nation was one long continued, striking illustration of the goodness of God. Even the Gentiles were not left without witness of their Creator's love: for he sent them fruitful seasons, filling their hearts with food and gladness. But what was all this to the manifestation of God's pity for a fallen race with

which these latter ages of the world have been blessed? "God *so* loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." The gift of the spirit is a great and glorious gift; but have we not reason to expect it after the gift that has been bestowed, the gift of God's only begotten Son? God's ancient people used to encourage their confidence under present difficulties, and their hope of future blessings, by calling to mind the great things which God had wrought for them in ages past. In the God that had delivered their fathers out of the land of Egypt, and brought them into the land of promise, they felt that they could safely trust. And have we not still greater reason to adopt a similar course? To be endued with power from on high, and to realize all the consequent advantages enumerated in the preceding article may seem, and to numbers doubtless does seem, something too great and good to be expected. But let us think of what God has done for us. Let us contemplate the Saviour's love, and as we see him fasting in the wilderness, enduring the reproaches of the Scribes and Pharisees in the synagogues, and in the temple; as we see him agonizing in the garden, and sweating as it were, great drops of blood, falling to the ground; as we see him meekly submitting to all the indignities and insults heaped upon him in the High Priest's house, and in the hall of Pilate; as we see him amid the clamours of the populace ascending the hill of Calvary, bearing his own cross; as we see him extended on that cross breathing out his soul into his Father's hands, crying "It is finished," and giving up the ghost; as we see him afterwards rising from the dead, and triumphantly ascending to the right hand of the Majesty on high; and as we see him now pleading his people's cause before the throne, ever living to make intercession for them; as we behold and consider these things, let us ask ourselves, Why all this? What is its object and design? Is it not all intended to procure the salvation of the human family? And are not the influences of the Holy Spirit in all their plenitude and fulness essential to the salvation of the world? And in order that we may help to hasten the world's salvation, is it not requisite that *we* should be filled with the Holy Ghost—endued with power from on high? And can the requisite influences be withheld? Has Jesus died to procure them? Does he now intercede for their bestowment? Is he exalted a Prince and a Saviour to shed them forth? And can they be withheld? Oh no! Our unbelief gives way; our doubts vanish. "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, *how shall he not* with him, also, freely give us all things" requisite to accomplish the great objects for which his Son was given? "If we, being evil, know how to give good gifts to our children, how much more shall our Heavenly Father (who is so good as to withhold not his only-begotten Son) give his Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" Encouraged by considerations like these, and reposing unshaken confidence in the merits of the Saviour's death, we will cast our despondency away, we will expect to be endued with power from on high; nay more, emboldened by the promises of Jehovah and by the displays of his infinite compassion which we have already witnessed,

"We'll take the blessing from above,
And wonder at his boundless love."

W. T.

I FIND more sure marks of authenticity in the Bible, than in any profane history whatsoever.—*Isaac Newton.*

And Sir Isaac Newton was not unqualified to judge on such a subject. How is it then, that so many who admit the truth of common history without hesitation, should reject the Bible? We answer, some are ignorant, and know not what they do; and others are wicked, and reject the Bible, not because they find it wanting in evidence, but because it reproves their wickedness, and troubles their guilty consciences. They can read and believe common histories, without having their sins pressed home upon them; but not the Bible. The matter is explained by the Saviour: "men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil."

THE POWER OF CHARITY.

At Montpellier (the neighbourhood of which place was styled by the French settlers, "the land of the green mountains," and which is described in "Buckingham's America" as possessing every element of landscape beauty, and every combination of the picturesque) there lived a pious lady, who devoted the greater part of her property to the relief of objects in distress. It happened one day, while passing through a little wood, accompanied by her servant, that she was stopped by a man, who presented a pistol to her, and demanded her money or her life. The good lady, without being terrified, looked on him with an air of kindness, and said, "Ah! my friend, you must be reduced to great extremity, since you are determined to take a part which, while drawing on you the wrath of God, exposes you incessantly to all the rigours of human justice. I wish I had wherewith to supply your wants, and extricate you from the dangerous situation in which you are; but I have, alas! only eighteen francs, which I had taken for my journey, and I offer you them with all my heart." The highwayman looking upon her attentively, before he would take the money, wished to know who she was; and when she told him,—"Wretch that I am," said he, throwing himself at her feet, "I have many times experienced your bounty, and have never been denied relief when I have sought it of you; and I was now upon the point of injuring you! Ah! believe me, my good lady, I did not know you, or I should not have molested you; for though I have given you but too great a proof that I am a robber, yet I am not a monster,—which I must be to injure a person so charitable as you are.—Go on then, keep your money, and I will myself escort you out of the wood; and if any one come to attack you, I will defend you at the hazard of my life." The lady was exceedingly affected, and endeavoured to represent to him his danger, and to urge motives of honour and religion, to induce him to quit so dreadful a mode of life; and promising to do more for him another time, she again offered him the eighteen francs; but knowing she wanted them for her journey, he would not accept them; till at last, she prevailed on him to take nine of them, which she threw to him on going out of the wood.

MEMOIR OF ANN RIDGWAY,
OF STALYBRIDGE.

The subject of the following memoir was born at Stalybridge in the year 1807. Whilst very young, she had the misfortune to be deprived of her mother by death, but by the kind and watchful care of her father and sisters, she was trained up in the fear of the Lord. She was in early life accustomed to attend the ministry of the Word, and became a scholar in the Chapel Street Sunday School, Stalybridge, in which she subsequently discharged the arduous duties of a teacher in so exemplary a manner, as to gain the affections and esteem of all who knew her. Though she was always remarkably steady and consistent in her outward deportment, yet it does not appear that she knew any thing experimentally of the saving grace of God, until near the twentieth year of her age. About this time, under the ministry of Mr. Newbery, she was fully awakened to a sense of her danger, and realised such clear and affecting views of her obligations to surrender herself to God, that she cried earnestly, and without ceasing, for the forgiveness of her sins, and for grace to enable her to devote herself soul and body to his service and glory. At this period of her religious history, she became a member of Sister Pearson's Class,—and fully indentified herself with the despised followers of the meek and holy Jesus.

It may be well here to state, that previous to the period to which we have just alluded, Sister R. felt much of the care of a "*Martha*" in reference to the management of household affairs—and frequently manifested on the Sabbath, more concern about the order and cleanliness of the house and furniture, than her elder sister could cordially approve of, in consequence of which her sister repeatedly expostulated with her on the subject. The evening upon which she was convinced of sin, under a sermon preached by Mr. Newbery, she returned home later than usual, and upon her sister's enquiring the reason, she replied with a heart ready to burst with penitential sorrow,—"Thou shalt never more have to reprove me for doing things on a Sunday;" and from that time she was always remarkably strict in her observance of the Sabbath, and in commanding those under her roof, that they kept sacred the day of rest.

The awakening impressions of which Sister R. was the subject, though acutely painful in their nature, happily issued in that repentance which needeth not to be repented of; for when she felt the force of Gospel truth, and saw herself, a guilty, wrath-deserving sinner, she resolved that she would not rest, until she found forgiveness and peace, through the mediation of Jesus Christ. She sought the blessing earnestly, with groanings and tears; nor did she seek in vain: for whilst partaking of the memorials of the dying love of Jesus, at the Sacramental Table, she was enabled by grace, through faith, to realise a sweet consciousness of her interest in the blood of Christ—even the forgiveness of her sins. She afterwards told her companions that when God revealed his forgiving love to her soul, she was so powerfully affected, that she could not but rise and declare what she had experienced as she felt prompted to do: and with heartfelt gratitude she assured them, that she had found the pearl of great price, and could sing with the poet:—

"My God is reconciled,
His pardoning voice I hear;
He owns me for his child,
I can no longer fear;
With confidence I now draw nigh,
And Father, Abba, Father, cry."

The following Sabbath, in her Class-meeting, Sister Ridgway told the pleasing story of a Saviour's love, as displayed in her own experience, and engaged in prayer with such holy fervour, and artless simplicity, and with such a flow of yearning pity and compassion for her companions and relatives, that the whole meeting were bathed in tears, and it is believed that impressions were made on the minds of many then present, that will never be erased.

Though her disposition was naturally diffident and unobtrusive, yet she was not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, when it had become the power of God unto the salvation of her soul. Religion had become the main concern of her life, the only, yet ever-flowing fountain of her joy,—and she made it her business to be "instant in season and out of season" in commending it to all within the sphere of her influence. When conversing with her companions, or with those by whom she was surrounded at her employment, the subjects of her conversation generally were,—the great business for eternity—the amazing love of God in giving his Son to save a sinful world—and the simple story of her own conversion and religious experience. She often closed her remarks on such subjects as these, by endeavouring to persuade those with whom she conversed, to surrender their undivided hearts to God. When she met with her companions in the evening, she frequently gave them a relation of her experience during the day—and she would have said sometimes, "O how sweetly the day has passed! what delightful and refreshing seasons I have enjoyed!" Thus whilst far removed from every thing like ostentation and show, she seemed resolved to lose no opportunity of doing good. In the Sabbath School she laboured incessantly to persuade the young to embrace the religion of the Saviour; and in the various circles in which she moved, she endeavoured to do good, not only by exhibiting a pious example, but also by administering reproof when she saw it required, and by reading and lending religious books. She trembled at the idea of bringing any reproach upon religion, and assured her companions, that she would rather be followed to the grave in the midst of her days, than live to disgrace the cause of the Redeemer. She was anxiously solicitous at a throne of grace for the welfare of her fellow-travellers to Zion, and if any of them halted by the way, or relaxed in holy fervour and devotedness to God, she visited them, and with prayers, entreaties, and tears, she would encourage them to go forward, and say to those of a fearful heart, "be strong, fear not."

Her pious exertions for the welfare of those within the sphere of her influence were not fruitless.—Two of her companions, for whose eternal interests she manifested the most anxious solicitude, and for a length of time apparently in vain, at length yielded to her pious importunity, were introduced by her to her class, and became devoted, exemplary Christians. One of them died happy in the Lord about ten years ago, and is doubtless with our departed sister, enjoying the happiness of the spirits of the just made perfect. The other is still a member of the Church Militant.

The duty of reproving the inconsistent and the careless, though enforced by Divine Authority, is, perhaps, of all others, the most neglected. To the sensitive mind of our Sister, this important duty was extremely painful;—but she had learned from Christ to consult the will of God before her feelings, and had imbibed too much of the constraining influence of the second great commandment, to suffer her fellow-creatures to sin, without warning them of the consequences. An instance of her success in the discharge of this duty, though unknown to Sister R., has been made known to her friends since her death, by an individual whom she had often reproved fourteen or fifteen years ago. Though the person alluded to had disregarded and almost forgotten her admonition on the subject, yet when she heard of her sudden removal by death, she was so forcibly reminded of her faithful reproofs, that she immediately gave up the practice for which she had been so often reproved, and resolved to pay strict attention to the claims of duty for the future. "Thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him."—"Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days."

About two years after her conversion to God, in the year 1828, she entered into the marriage state with brother Ridgway. In her new relation, she entered upon a new scene of duties, joys and sorrows, to which she had hitherto been a stranger;—and with her partner she resolved that religion should be made the great business of life, and that in all their ways, they would acknowledge the Lord; and throughout the period of their happy union, they have been enabled to say,

"In all our ways thy hand we own,
Thy ruling providence we see."

Before she had been married twelve months, she gave birth to twins. This event gave a great shock to her constitution, from which she never fully recovered. During the year 1831 she met with a severe trial in the loss of a lovely little girl, just beginning to walk and lisp its mother's name, which was suddenly taken ill, and died in a few days. Sister R. was always remarkably fond of her children, but at this time this was her only child, and the shock was a peculiarly heavy one. Her heart was almost broken, but in the depth of her sorrow she was enabled to say, "Thy will, O God, be done." After its death she said to her husband, "I believe God has taken away my child because I made an idol of it, or to save me from doing so, or for some other wise and gracious purpose, and therefore, painful as the shock is, I will bow to his will." On another occasion she said to her husband, "Perhaps this is a punishment for our unfaithfulness, let us kiss the rod, and the hand that hath appointed it, and resolve to live nearer to God. Let the Scriptures be read more constantly, and family and closet devotion attended to with greater fervour, and let us humble ourselves before God, lest a greater evil come upon us."

As she continued to bear children, her bodily frame declined in health and vigour, and on such occasions she was generally reduced to such a state of feebleness and helplessness, that nothing short of the kind interposition of Providence, could have restored her to her family and friends. She bore her afflictions with Christian fortitude and patience; she seldom complained; she never murmured, but often said, "I wish to bear with patience whatever my Heavenly Father sees fit to lay upon me. I believe he sees it necessary for me to be afflicted, and I wish to bow with humble submission to his will."

As her family cares increased, and her health became impaired, she often lamented that she was unable to enjoy the means of grace, and opportunities of religious communion with God's people, as she did in the early period of her Christian career. When speaking of those times she said, "Ah! those were my golden days, when I had neither worldly nor family cares, —when I had a stout healthy body, and my soul filled with burning zeal for God's glory,—those were happy days."

Notwithstanding her increasing infirmities, she continued closely united to God, and though there was little noise or outward profession, she was esteemed by all who knew her, as a devoted disciple of the Lord Jesus.

By her class-mates she was greatly beloved. Her experience was generally of a very profitable and instructive character, and her prayers were presented to the throne of grace, with such holy fervour, and such lively confidence in God, as often led those present to feel "It is good to be here."

During the time that Mr. Dyson travelled in the Staleybridge Circuit, Sister R. was repeatedly urged to take charge of a female class. She could not, however, be persuaded to do so; and when closely pressed and reasoned with by her husband on the subject, she wept, and said, "I feel myself laid under obligations to my Heavenly Father which I can never discharge; and if I give my all to him, my offering would be poor, compared with what he has done for me; but I cannot overcome my diffidence. I want to be useful, and to do more for God's cause than I have done; but I dare not engage a class. I will try to live nearer to God, and to labour according to my ability in another way, but it must be in an humbler sphere." She did, however, assist her leader occasionally, and engage in prayer in the class more frequently than she had done previously, until her increasing infirmities rendered her incapable of attending the means.

During the last few years of her life, she was several times brought very near to the gates of death, and about three years ago, she appeared to be reduced to the last extremity. Her friends were watching around her bed, and expecting every moment to be her last. At that moment of anxiety and suspense, she suddenly revived, and with the holy animation of a dying Christian, raising her hands and eyes towards heaven, she quoted those lines from one of our hymns:

> "From care, and sin, and sorrow free,
> Give me O Lord to find in thee,
> An everlasting rest."

And then she appeared to be sweetly falling asleep in Jesus; but, contrary to all expectation, she was again restored to her family and friends; but from that time she considered herself to be treading on the brink of the grave, and often said, that her stay here would be short.

For some weeks previous to her departure, she expressed her fears that she should not survive her approaching confinement. A few days before her death, when in conversation with her husband, she said, "I feel a want of the means. I always found it profitable to have communion with God's people, and now that I am deprived of it, I feel my loss; but God knows all things. I am not able to go to the meeting, and he requires no impossibilities. I hope I am living to his glory, and in the enjoyment of his favour, and you must remember me at a throne of grace." And then with tears she begged that her husband would not forget her in the trying hour, but that in the hour of nature's extremity he would retire to his closet, and plead with God on her behalf.

On Thursday the 4th of November, she was unwell during the day, but was so far recovered in the afternoon, that she conversed with her family as cheerfully as she had done for months. About 8 o'clock she suddenly became worse, so that her husband had to carry her to bed. About ten she gave birth to a little daughter, before which it was evident that the wheels of nature had begun to lag. Stimulants were applied, but in vain; for the hand of death was upon her. Of this she seemed fully aware, and said to her sister, "This will be the last time;" and about eleven o'clock she said, "I am going—I am going—I am going—Lord help me," and immediately fell asleep in Jesus. An affectionate husband and four young children are left behind her, in the vale of tears; but many prayers are offered for them, that when their earthly career is closed, they may be re-united in the paradise of God, to her who was so dear to them on earth.

Sister R. had nearly completed her thirty-fifth year, about fifteen of which she had been a pious, humble, sincere Christian. A funeral sermon was preached on the occasion of her death, to an overflowing and affected congregation. May all then present, may all who knew her, and mayest thou, reader, attend to the solemn injunction of the Lord Jesus Christ: "Be ye also ready; for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of Man cometh." Amen.

S. S.

THE CHRISTIAN'S GREAT CONSOLATION.

Jesus, I my cross have taken,
Left my all to follow thee;
Mourning, poor, despised, forsaken,
Thou, from hence, my all shalt be!

Perish every fond ambition,
All I've sought, or hop'd, or known,
Yet how rich is my condition,
God and heaven are all my own!

Let the world despise and leave me,
They did leave my Saviour too,
Human hopes and looks deceive me,
Thou art not, like them, untrue;

And whilst thou shalt smile upon me,
God of wisdom, love, and might,
Friends may hate, and foes may scorn me,
Show thy face, and all is right.

Go, then, earthly fame and treasure,
Come disaster, scorn, and pain!
In thy service, pain is pleasure,
With thy favour, loss is gain.

I have called thee Abba, Father;
I have set my heart on thee;
Storms may howl, and clouds may gather,
All must work for good and me.

Man may trouble and distress me,
'Twill but drive me to thy breast;
Life with trials hard may press me,
'Twill but bring me sweeter rest.

Oh, 'tis not in grief to harm me,
While thy love is left to me;
Oh, 'tis not in joy to charm me,
Were that joy unmixed with thee!

Soul, then know thy full salvation,
Rise o'er sin, and fear, and care,
Joy to find in every station,
Something still to do or bear!

Think what spirit dwells within thee,
Think what heavenly smiles are thine;
Think that Jesus died to save thee,
Child of heaven—can'st thou repine?

Haste thee on, from grace to glory,
Arm'd by faith, and wing'd by prayer,
Heaven's eternal day's before thee,
God's own hand shall guide thee there.

Soon shall close thy earthly mission,
Soon shall pass thy pilgrim days,
Hope shall change to glad fruition,
Faith to sight, and prayer to praise.

WITH WHAT MEASURE YE METE, IT SHALL BE MEASURED TO YOU AGAIN.

The following authentic account was found in a manuscript book written by John Wesley, the founder of Methodism.

"A gentleman, who was very ill, sending for Dr. Lake, told him, 'He found he must die, and would therefore relate a very odd story to him.' He had, about a fortnight before, been riding over Hounslow Heath, where several boys were playing at cricket. One of them striking the ball, hit him just on the toe with it, looked him in the face, and ran away. His toe pained him extremely. As soon as he came to Brentford he sent for a surgeon, who was for cutting it off. But unwilling to suffer that, he went on to London, and when he arrived there, immediately called another surgeon to examine it; who then told him his foot must be cut off. But this he would not hear off; so before the next day the mortification seized his leg, and in a day or two more struck up into his body.

"Dr. Lake asked him whether he knew the boy that struck the ball? He answered, 'About ten years ago I was riding over Hounslow Heath, when an old man ran by my horse's side, begged me to relieve him, and said he was almost famished. I bade him be gone. He kept up with me still: upon which I threatened to beat him. Finding he did not take any notice of it, I drew my sword, and with one blow killed him. A boy about four years old, who was with him, screamed out, his father was killed. His face I perfectly remember. That boy it was who struck the ball against me, which is the cause of my death.'"

WATER BAPTISM;

OR A CHALLENGE AND A REPLY.

The following letters have passed between me and a friend in Manchester; they are published for the general good:—

Manchester, Dec. 1, 1841.

Dear Brother Barker,

As you are coming to Manchester to preach for Brother ——, in Oak Street Chapel, I shall be glad to meet you in *public discussion*, any evening *but Thursday*, while you are here. The subject—Water Baptism. I oppose your pamphlet, which I suppose you are prepared to defend. The meeting will excite great interest in Manchester, Write me, my brother; fix the day, either *before* or *after* you preach, and I will make the necessary arrangements here. Of course, we are both contending for what we believe to be truth.

Your's, affectionately,
F. B.

Newcastle-on-Tyne,
12 Mo. 6, 1841.

My Friend,

If you think proper to meet me on the Right of God's People to judge for themselves what is true and good, and to obey God rather than man, or on the Duty of Temperance, Trust in God, Liberality, the Duty of Christian Churches to support their own poor Members, or any of those great principles which I have laid down in my writings, and which I am accustomed to inculcate in my lectures on Evangelical Reform, I shall have no objection to meet you in discussion; but on the subject of baptism I do not feel disposed,—I do not feel at liberty,—I should not think it right to spend my time in public discussions. When I wrote on the subject, it was not so much for the sake of my views that I wrote, as for liberality. On the subject of baptism I have not, in fact, any controversy with any, except those who make certain views on baptism essential to Christian fellowship: and even with these my controversy is not about their views of baptism, but their intolerance. I have no doubt of the *truth* of the sentiments published by me on the subject of baptism, but I am not much concerned for their fate. If a man adopt my views on that subject, he will not, that I know of, be much better, and if he reject them, he will not, in my judgment, be much worse. If a man believes every truth that Christ has taught, and every thing binding that he has commanded on all his followers, and if he be honestly desirous to understand and do the whole will of God, I have no doubt he will do well. I know that in practical matters, as well as moral matters, a correct view of Christ's meaning is of great importance. It may make a great difference in a man's real worth and usefulness if he has not right views of the meaning of Christ's precepts on the subject of meekness, laying up treasures, trusting in God, loving our enemies, doing good, &c., &c., but the different views entertained on the subject of baptism, make no difference in a man's worth and usefulness at all: the baptizers of infants, and the baptizers of adults, the sprinklers, and the immersers, and those who think water Baptism no longer binding in any form, may all be equally useful, equally valuable characters in all respects. With respect to the subject of property, war, law-suits, respect of persons, love to our enemies, forbearing one another in love, liberty to judge and act for ourselves, free from the restraints of human authority, &c. &c. the case is widely different: differences of views as to what are the precepts of Christ, and as to what is their meaning on these matters, do make a great difference in men's real worth, and happiness, and usefulness. There is a great deal of difference between killing people, and converting them to God; between suing people at law, and transforming their characters by exhibiting to them in our example the meekness and tenderness of the Gospel of Christ. There is a great deal of difference between a man spending his life in laying up treasures for himself on earth, and employing all his resources in doing good. One view of the meaning of Christ's doctrine on these subjects, makes a man a shedder of blood; another view of its meaning, makes him a saver of souls from death; one view makes a man, or allows a man to be litigious, dragging before the judges and magistrates, and lodging in dungeons, or sacrificing on the gallows, every one who may take away his cloak, or strike him on the face, or run into his debt; the other makes a man an example of supernatural, godlike charity and disinterestedness. One view tends to make a man earthly, niggardly, anxious, distrustful, useless,—a miserable cumberer of the ground: the other tends to make a man heavenly, liberal, peaceful, confiding in God, useful,—fruitful in every good work, a blessing to the bodies and souls of all over whom his influence may extend,—a honour to religion, an image of his God. One view tends to make a man irritable, revengeful, quarrelsome, miserable, and may easily bring on him the guilt of rending the ties of families, breaking hearts, and destroying life; the other makes a man a peacemaker, a healer of wounds, a centre of union, a happy, godlike, useful man. One view tends to make men lords over their brethren, transforming the church into a likeness of the kingdoms of this world, making believers in Christ, who should be one, into two classes, turning those who should be brethren, and fellow-servants, into lords and subjects, masters and slaves, rendering the church a scene of strife and contention, causing schisms, persecutions, and scandals without end, and destroying, in effect, the whole religion of Christ, both in form, in substance, and in spirit: the other view makes men free, strikes at the root of all bigotry, intolerance, spiritual despotism, and spiritual slavery, promotes love, restores the church to unity, to harmony, and peace, and prepares it for becoming the instrument of illuminating and regenerating the whole family of man.

I should, therefore, think it right enough to hold a public conversation or discussion with you on these principles. If you should believe yourself called upon to oppose the doctrines inculcated in my writings on peace, or temperance, or non-resistance, or respect of persons, or charity, or the use of money, or trust in God, or the right of private judgment, or human creeds, &c. I have no objection to meet you in discussion on these points. I have no objection to meet you on the question, Whether a belief that water baptism, as an ordinance of Christ, ought to be made a condition of church fellowship, and a necessary qualification for the ministerial work? I undertake to prove that a belief that water baptism is an ordnance of Christ ought not to be required of persons as a condition of their admission into the Christian church, nor as a necessary qualification for the ministerial office. Are you prepared to undertake the contrary? If so, I have no objection to converse with you, either publicly or privately, on this subject. But as for the question whether water baptism be binding on Christians or not, I have already stated what I have to say about it. I want neither private nor public conversation on the subject. The Quaker, the sprinkler of infants, and the immerser of adults are alike to me, provided they be all sincere, conscientious. I believe the Quakers' views on this subject to be nearest truth, but I believe the views of none of them, in themselves, to be of any considerable importance. Let me have something worth talking or writing about, and I will talk and write as long as you please perhaps; but I want neither to talk nor to write for the sake of vanity and vexation of spirit.

Your's affectionately,
J. BARKER.

P.S. I ought to say, that the kind spirit in which your letter is written, has given me great pleasure: how much happier, and how much more comely would it be, if the professed followers of Christ would always exhibit such a spirit of kindness towards those who differ from them in sentiment.

NECESSITY OF ZEAL IN MINISTERS.

"MANNERS are every day becoming more corrupt among us, because the zeal of ministers is daily becoming cooler; and because there are found among us few apostolical men, who oppose themselves, as a brazen wall, to the torrent of vice. For the most part, we behold the wicked altogether at ease in their sins, for the want of hearing more frequently those thundering voices which, accompanied with the Spirit of God, would effectually rouse them from their awful slumber. The want of zeal, so clearly discernible among pastors, is chiefly owing to that base timidity which is not hardy enough to make a resolute stand against common prejudice, and which regards the worthless approbation of men beyond their eternal interests. That must needs be a worldly and criminal consideration, which makes us more anxious for our own glory, than for the glory of God. That must truly be fleshly wisdom, which can represent religious zeal under the false ideas of excess, indiscretion, and temerity; a pretext this, which nearly extinguishes every spark of zeal in the generality of ministers. This want of courage they honour with the specious names of moderation and prudence: under pretence of not carrying their zeal to an excess, they are content to be entirely destitute of it. And while they are solicitous to shun the rocks of imprudence and precipitation, they run, without fear, upon the sands of indolence and cowardice. They desire to become useful to sinners, and, at the same time, to be had in estimation by them. They wish to manifest such a zeal as the world is disposed to applaud. They are anxious so to oppose the passions of men, that they may yet secure their praises; so to condemn the vices they love, that they may still be approved of by those they condemn. But when we probe a wound to the bottom, we must expect to awaken a degree of peevishness in the patient, if we do not extort from him some bitter exclamation.

Let us not deceive ourselves; if that Apostolical zeal which once converted the world, is become so rare among us, it is because, in the discharge of our sacred functions, we seek ourselves, rather than the glory of Christ and the salvation of souls. Glory and infamy were regarded by the Apostle with equal indifference, while he filled up the duties of his important office. He knew it impossible to please men, and to save them; to be the servant of the world, and the servant of Christ. Nevertheless, there are many among us, who are seeking to unite these different services, which the Apostle believed to be irreconcileable."—*Massillon.*

CHAPEL DEEDS.

How would you have your chapels settled?

Ans. As usual, with these differences, 1. I would have each chapel secured to the church worshipping in it, instead of being secured to any Connexion or Conference. 2. I would give the church all the powers which trustees have been accustomed to have. I would have none to have any power over chapels, but members of the church. The plan of having persons as trustees, who are not members of the church, or of allowing persons to continue trustees after they have ceased to be members of the church, is most unreasonable. Only to think of power being given to a few ungodly persons, to decide what is Gospel, and what is not,—power to shut out of the chapel the very persons who built it. 3. Instead of referring in the deed to any human creed or confession, I would refer simply to the New Testament. I would give no human interpretation whatever, but simply devote the place to the purpose of propagating the religion of Christ, as laid down in the New Testament.

Question. But will not chapels thus settled, be in danger of falling into the hands of Unitarians?

Ans. 1. I do not think they would. 2. No other form of chapel deed would be able to prevent them from falling into the hands of Unitarians, if Unitarianism should become generally prevalent. 3. The way to prevent the errors of Unitarianism, as well as all other errors from prevailing, is to leave men perfectly free from human creeds, and accustom them to refer constantly to the plain New Testament.

Give all the chapels to Christ, and see if he does not take care of them, and preserve them to his own cause. I confess I did at first feel some hesitation on this subject: I felt as if I could have liked to shut out certain errors by name: but if I should begin to name errors and doctrines, where should I end? The principle is a bad one. The New Testament condemns all error, and will condemn every error that may arise to the end of time. The New Testament teaches all truth, and will be equal to all the wants of the human family throughout all ages. Let the chapels, then, be settled on Jesus Christ, and let the church be his trustees, and leave the rest to God. It is time the experiment of trusting God was properly tried. We have learned to trust God for bread, without worldly securities; we have learned to trust him with our lives, without the protection of arms; let us now learn to trust him with our chapels, without the help of human creeds. It is my conviction, that as we have found trust in God the true wisdom hitherto, we shall find it so to the end. However, my advice is, that we fairly try the experiment.

CHRISTIAN UNITY.

"*Ye are all one in Christ Jesus.*"
GAL. iii. 28.

One God and one Father we own;
All sprung from the same common stock;
We acknowledge one Saviour alone,
Who laid down his life for his flock.

No ties upon earth can be found
So tender, endearing, and strong,
As those with which brethren are bound,
Who to the Redeemer belong.

His blood their full ransom has paid,
Their trust is alone in his name;
United in him as their head,
Their hopes and their joys are the same

May we all of his Spirit partake,
That our interest in him we may prove,
And abound, for the Saviour's dear sake,
In gentleness, meekness, and love!

Names, parties, and sects, disappear,
With their separate interests and laws;
No name but of Christ would we hear,
No int'rest but that of his cause.

O! how do we long for the hour
When each nation, and kindred, and tribe,
Salvation, and glory, and power
Shall to the Redeemer ascribe!

Those predictions, dear Jesus, fulfil;
Erect and establish thy throne
In each sinner's heart, that thy will
May on earth, as in heaven, be done!

RELIGIOUS CHIT-CHAT; OR IDLE TALK.

THE following letter was written by John Fletcher, of Madley, and is extracted from his published works.

"TO MISS HATTEN.

"MADAM,

"Mrs. Hatten gave me, this morning, your serious letter. You wisely observe therein the continual need professing Christians have to guard against religious *chit-chat*, and conclude by requesting a few lines, when I should have an opportunity of writing; but as there is nothing in your letter which *requires* an answer, I was thinking, whether I could answer it without being guilty of religious chit-chat; for as there is such a thing in speaking, no doubt in writing also. I believe I should have sacrificed to conscience what the world calls good manners, had I not, just after, accidentally opened Lopez's Life upon the following passage, which I shall transcribe, hoping it will be blessed both to the reader and copier. 'He was as sparing of words in writing as in speaking. He never wrote first to any one, nor did he answer others, but when necessity or charity obliged him to do it; and then so precisely, and in so few words, that nothing could be retrenched. I have several letters in my hands, of five or six lines each. In answer to those he had received from the Viceroy of Mexico, he sent him one containing only these words —*I will do what you command me.* And although this manner of writing might seem disrespectful to persons of so high quality, yet it gave no offence from one who was so far from all compliments, and who never spoke any thing superfluous.'

"Now, Madam, for fear of *writing* any thing superfluous, I shall conclude by wishing both you and I may follow Lopez, as he followed Christ; and subscribing myself, Madam, the ready servant of you and your's in the Gospel,

"J. F."

THE USE OF PROPERTY.

THERE are four ways in which men may dispose of their property.

1. They may lay it up as a provision for the time to come,—as a security against future want.

2. They may spend it in extravagance; in pleasing themselves; in indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind.

3. They may employ it in trade, or let it out for hire, in order to make it more, that they may become rich.

4. Or they may, lastly, employ it in doing good, in promoting, in various ways, the temporal and eternal interests of their fellow-men. These

are the only ways in which men generally are accustomed to dispose of their property; and the question is, In which of these four ways *ought* we to dispose of our property? The question is of great importance, and deserves our most serious consideration.

It is my conviction that we ought to employ the whole of our property in the last-mentioned way, namely, in doing good: that we ought neither to lay it up as a security against future want, nor to spend it in extravagance, nor to employ it merely as a means of obtaining more property, with a view to becoming rich, but that we ought to employ the whole in such a way as, we have reason to believe, is best adapted to promote the temporal and eternal welfare of our fellow-men.

1. In the first place, we ought not to lay up our property as a security against future want. That this way of disposing of our property is wrong, appears to me manifest from the following considerations:—

1. It is expressly forbidden by the Saviour. His words are these: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: for where your treasure is, there will your hearts be also." Matt. vi. 19–21. These words are exceedingly plain, and they bear exactly on the question. Some say the words are figurative, but supposing this to be the case, they are no less plain on that account. But the truth is, the words are not so figurative as some suppose. The only figurative expression in the passage is the middle one, "Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven," and the figure is easily enough understood. The first part of the passage, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth," is perfectly literal; there is not a figurative word in it. And that the words have reference to the practice of laying up treasure as a security against future want, is plain from the context. The Redeemer knew that people would be staggered at his doctrine, and be ready to ask, "But what shall we do in the time of sickness or old age? Are we not to lay up for ourselves what will secure to us food and raiment? Must we run the risk of perishing?" The Redeemer replies to this objection at full length, as follows:—"Take no thought,—do not trouble yourselves,—about your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your Heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? Which of you by taking thought, can add one cubit to his stature,—one moment to his existence? And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: and yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you; O ye of little faith? Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek;) for your Heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." Matt. vi. 25–34. It is plain from the whole passage, that what the Redeemer forbids is, Laying up treasures for ourselves on earth, as a security against future want, as a provision for times of sickness and old age. His words have no meaning applied to any other subject.

This way of disposing of property is at variance with other portions of the New Testament. The Apostle says, "Having food and raiment, let us be therewith content." And he directs Timothy to charge them that are rich, *not to trust in uncertain riches*, but in the living God who giveth us richly all things to enjoy. We are forbidden, then, to trust in uncertain riches. But those who lay them by as a security against future want, trust in them; they trust in them for a supply of food and raiment, in times of sickness and old age; and this is the very trust which is forbidden. Yes, that very trust in riches as a security against future want, for which people are so accustomed to plead, is expressly forbidden.

"But might it not be some other trust in riches that the Apostle forbids?" What other trust could it be? People do not trust in riches for the salvation of their souls. It is food and raiment for which they are accustomed to trust in riches, and this trust the Apostle forbids, and directs that it should be placed in the living God, who giveth us all things richly to enjoy. He further commands, that instead of laying up, or reserving their riches, as a security against future want, they should do good, that they should be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; in this way laying up in store a good foundation against the time to come, that they might lay hold on eternal life. 1 Tim. vi.

2. The Redeemer not only commands us not to lay up for ourselves treasures on earth, but he commands us to lay up for ourselves treasures in heaven. But the only way in which we can lay up for ourselves treasures in heaven, is by employing them in doing good. "Sell that thou hast," said the Redeemer to the rich young man, Matt. xix. 21. "Sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and *thou shalt have treasure in heaven*." It is in this way that the Saviour directs his disciples generally to lay up for themselves treasures in heaven. "Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags that wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth." Luke xii. 33. The Apostle also teaches that this is the way to lay up treasures in heaven. "Charge them that are rich, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate, laying up a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life. 1. Tim. vi. No one surely can imagine that hoarding money in Banks and Insurance Offices, in Benefit Societies, or Beneficent Funds, is laying up treasures in heaven. Laying up treasures on earth, and laying up treasures in heaven, are spoken of by Christ as two quite opposite things; and it is intimated most plainly, that it is impossible for a man to do both. The man therefore who lays up for himself treasures on earth, must give up all hopes of having treasures in heaven.

3. Again; the Redeemer teaches us, that if we lay up for ouselves treasures on earth, our hearts will be on earth. "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." And so it is. It is impossible to lay up for ourselves treasures on earth, and yet have our hearts in heaven. Indeed, it is having their hearts on earth that makes men desire to lay up for themselves treasures here below. If their hearts were in heaven, and if their sole desire was to please God, and do good o teirh fellow-men, they would employ their wealth in doing good. But if it were possible for a man who had his heart in heaven, to begin to lay up for himself treasures on earth, his heart would soon change places, and take up its dwelling where his treasures were. And yet we are commanded to have our hearts in heaven. "Set your affection on things above, and not on things on the earth."

4. The Redeemer also informs us, that treasures laid up for ourselves on earth are insecure, and that those who rely on them as a security against future want, are very likely to be disappointed. He tells us, that treasures laid up on earth are liable to be consumed by moth and rust, or to be carried away by thieves. The Apostle Paul also expresses the same sentiment, though in different words, when he exhorts Timothy to charge the rich, not to trust in *uncertain* riches. In our day men's treasures are not so liable to suffer from moth and rust, nor are they, perhaps, so likely to be carried off by lawless, midnight robbers, but they are still as uncertain, as insecure, as they were in the days of Christ and the Apostles. What multitudes there

are, at this very hour, who, after toiling for wealth with all their soul and might for twenty or thirty years, and after laying up for themselves thousands or scores of thousands of pounds, are left without a penny. The weather itself is not more uncertain than wealth. There are hundreds around us, who were possessed of thousands and tens of thousands of pounds two or three years ago, who are now dependent upon their friends, or upon their labour, for their daily bread. And those who are rich at present, may be poor to-morrow. The most careful and the most prudent are unable to secure their treasures on earth. Persons that, a few days ago, were charging their neighbours with having lost their property for want of proper care, have now lost their own, and are convinced at last that care and prudence are not so effectual as they imagined them to be.— It is the appointment of God, that riches shall not be secure, and no one can alter his appointment.— Put your treasures where you will, they will be still in peril. If you buy land, it may lose its value: if you build houses, they may not let; or if they let, the tenants may defraud you of the rent. If you put it in Banks, the Banks may break; if you put it in Railways, the shares may become worthless; and the very means you use for your security, may plunge you into irremediable difficulties. If you keep it in your houses, it will tempt the thieves; and if you lend it to your friends, they may beggar both themselves and you. If you lodge it in Benefit Societies, they may fail, and even Insurances themselves are not secure. The world is full of proofs of the insecurity of property. I might mention hundreds of persons who have laid up treasures for themselves on earth, and who, a short time ago, fancied themselves and their families quite secure, who have lost all.

Many by laying up for themselves treasures on earth, bring upon themselves the very evils they are so anxious to avoid. I read in a paper, sometime ago, of seventeen persons, who, in consequence of their endeavours to secure for themselves something against the time of old age, were all of them brought to the poor-house or to the lunatic asylum They had lodged all that they could muster in an Insurance Office, and the insurance company failed, and they were deprived of all. I heard of one, a few days ago, who had paid into a Provident Society for nearly thirty years, in expectation of receiving twenty pounds a year after he reached a certain age; but instead of receiving twenty, he receives but five, and four of that five he is obliged to pay back to the society. I heard of a female, some time ago, a widow of a popular preacher, who had trusted in such a society, and was left to disappointment in the same way. A relation of mine paid into a Benefit Society, near Leeds, nearly forty years, and when he needed relief in his old age, received only insult. A person writes to me from Macclesfield, telling me doleful stories respecting his old uncle and others, who paid into Benefit Societies for thirty or forty years, and had the vexation and disappointment to find the societies failing, just when they were looking to them for relief. A person near where I am now writing, laid up twenty-five or thirty thousand pounds. The Imperial Bank, in which he had purchased some shares, failed; the creditors came upon him, and took from him property to the amount of seventeen thousand pounds, and because he refused to account for a few hundreds more, they lodged him in the New Bailey, and now I hear he has died in the prison, of a broken heart. Another near this place, met with a similar end. The Bank swallowed up nearly his all; and he himself died in the Isle of Man, of a broken heart. Another friend mustered two thousand pounds, and invested it in a railway; the concern proved a failure, and he lost the whole. Another lodged her property in a Mining Concern, and lost it.

But the time would fail me to relate all the cases of this kind which have come to my knowledge. The world abounds with such cases: men that have ruined themselves by laying up for themselves treasures on earth, may be found in every town and neighbourhood. Disappointments and wretchedness are the common results of such efforts. I heard but two days ago of a place in which there were lately no less than fifteen Benefit Societies, so called, and no less than thirteen of them have failed. So insecure are the hopes which rest not on the promises of God.

5. We have *no need* to lay up for ourselves treasures on earth as a security against future want. God has promised that our wants shall be supplied, if we are faithful to our duty. In the Sermon on the Mount, in one of the passages already quoted, we have the plainest and fullest assurances possible given us, that God will bestow on his obedient people every thing that is needful for their welfare. "Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment:" and if your heavenly Father has given you life, the greater blessing, will he not give you food, the smaller one? if he has given you a body so fearfully and wonderfully made, will he not give you a little raiment with which to clothe it? "Behold the fowls of the air, for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are not ye much better than they? And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: and yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? For your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." What can be plainer? What can be more satisfactory? And similar assurances are given us in other parts of the New Testament. The Apostle Peter exhorts us to cast all our care on God, assuring us that God careth for us. The Apostle Paul exhorts us to "Be careful for nothing, but in every thing, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, to let our requests be made known to God: and he assures us, that the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus:" and a little after he adds, "And my God shall supply all your needs, according to his riches in glory,--according to the vastness of his love,—by Christ Jesus." Philip. iv. 6, 7, 19. In writing to the Corinthians, and urging them to employ the whole of their property in doing good, he employs the same kind of encouraging argument. "God is able to make all grace,—every kind of needful blessing,--abound towards you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work." 2. Cor. ix. 8. And again it is written, "Let your conversation be without covetousness, and be content with such things as ye have, for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, the Lord is my helper, I will not fear what man shall do unto me." Heb. xiii. 5, 6. "The Redeemer teaches us to pray, "Give us this day our daily bread;" and a little after, to assure us that when we pray, our wants shall be supplied, he adds, "Ask, and it shall be given; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: for every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seekath findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. What man is there of you, who, if his son ask bread, will give him a stone? or, if he ask a fish, will give him a serpent? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?" Can promises be plainer? People ask, If we are not to lay up a little for ourselves, what is to become of us in times of sickness and old age? The passages which we have quoted give the answer: God will provide for us, if we serve him. He has given us the fullest and most explicit promises, that he will give us every thing that is needful to our welfare. And what reason is there why we should not trust in these promises? We are accustomed to rely on other promises of the Gospel, why should we not rely upon these? We believe

God's promises of spiritual blessings, and to cherish doubts of their truth or fulfilment we regard as a sin: and why should we not do the same with respect to his promises of earthly blessings? We think it our duty to trust in God for pardon, for peace and comfort of mind, for victory over our spiritual enemies, and for all the blessings of heaven, and what reason is there why we should not trust in God for food and raiment? God has as plainly promised that he will give us food, and drink, and raiment, as he has that he will forgive the sins of the believing penitent, and take to heaven his faithful servants; and what reason is there, why we should believe him in one case, and disbelieve in the other? If, instead of seeking pardon and salvation by simply believing and obeying the Gospel, we were to seek them by a heap of penances and ceremonies of which the Gospel makes no mention, you would consider us as setting ourselves against God: and do we not set ourselves against God, when, instead of trusting in him for a supply of our temporal wants, and doing good with our property, we seek to secure ourselves from want by laying up for ourselves treasures on earth, in direct opposition to his commands? I cannot see any reason why we should not trust God with our bodies as well as with our souls. If we are to disregard God's promises and directions respecting temporal things, I can see no reason why we should not disregard his promises and directions respecting spiritual things. If we may call in question the truth and wisdom of what Christ and his Apostles have said respecting things temporal, I see no reason why we should not next throw away the Gospel altogether. And if we are to receive one part of the Gospel, and to believe one part of its promises, I cannot see why we should not receive the whole Gospel, and rest on every promise it contains, as on the words of him that cannot lie.

And not only has God promised that he will supply the wants of those who love and serve him, but he has given us, in the history of his conduct towards his people, the most striking and the most abundant proofs that his promises shall not fail. He always *has* taken care of his people: there never was a case, in which any of his servants ever trusted in him, and were confounded. Look at the history of Abraham: he was called by God to leave his Father's house, and his Father's country, and to become a sojourner in a strange land; and he obeyed, and went out, not knowing whither he went. He sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, having no inheritance in it, no, not so much as to set his foot on. But he never wanted. God gave him abundance. He multiplied his sheep and his oxen, his men-servants and women-servants, and all that he had, and made him one of the greatest and wealthiest persons in the land. God went with him in all his wanderings, and prepared his way, and gave him friends wherever he came. He blessed him, and made him a blessing, and engaged that through him and through his seed should all the families of the earth be blessed. Gen. xii. Acts vii. Heb. xi. Look at the history of Jacob. When he fled from his brother Esau, he had nothing but his shepherd's crook, and on his way to Haran, he slept on the ground beneath the open sky, and his pillow was a heap of stones. While he slept thus alone in the plain, he had a vision of providence, and God said to him, "Behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land." And God was faithful to his promise. He found him a home, he prospered him in his undertakings, and when Jacob returned to the land of his Fathers, he said, when engaged in prayer with his God, "With my staff I passed over this Jordan, and now I am become two bands." How God provided for his servant afterwards, by sending his son Joseph before him into Egypt, and so preparing corn for him and his whole household, and how the whole family were supplied during the long and fearful famine which prevailed through all that part of the world, is so familiar, that it is not needful to repeat it here.

We have further proof of God's care for his people in the history of the Children of Israel generally. When he led them through the wilderness, he fed them with bread from heaven, and gave them water from the flinty rock. At one time he sent an angel to feed Elijah, at another he commanded the ravens to feed him, and at another time he supplied his wants from the almost exhausted resources of a poor widow, who was herself at that very time, as she supposed, on the very brink of starvation. And God is the same now as he was then. He is equally kind to his people, and he is as able and as willing to supply their wants. He is as faithful to his promises now, as in the generations of old, and sooner than he will suffer his people to lack that which is best for them, he will supply them by miracle again. He does supply them by miracle. We have facts on record, innumerable facts, proving that God works miracles for his people still. He may not rain bread upon them out of heaven,—he may not send his angel with supplies, or employ the ravens to feed them; but he helps them in other ways as strange. He disturbs a wealthy miser in his sleep, and will not suffer him to rest, until he has sent a loaf of bread and a joint of meat to a poor neighbour, whose little ones had, at that very time, eaten up their last crust, and retired to rest without food, and without knowing from what quarter their next supplies were to come. Was not that a miracle? To another of his servants, when in want, he sends a timid bird with a silver coin, and to another he sends a stranger with supplies. The occurrences of this description which are given in Treatises on Divine Providence, and in the lives of God's people, are innumerable. Many striking cases of this description are given in a collection of anecdotes published by the Tract Society, and I see no reason to call in question their truth. Many speak as if miracles had ceased; but they do not, in my judgment, speak truly. Miracles have not ceased, and I see no reason to suppose that they ever will cease. God is working miracles every day: the world is full of his wonders. He works miracles to feed the fowls of the air. We have miracles before us at this hour, if we are willing to observe them. It is winter: the hills and the valleys are covered with snow, and the supplies of food with which the birds of the air were furnished through the summer, are all cut off. But the birds do not perish; our Heavenly Father feedeth them; and not a sparrow can fall to the ground without his notice. For some of them he provides a large supply of various kinds of fruit, which ripen just when other kinds of food begin to fail them: Is not this a miracle? Others when supplies begin to fail them here, he conducts to far off lands, leading them without compass or way-mark over boundless and trackless deeps, and lands them in the midst of plenty: Is not this a miracle? Others, to which he has not given the power to visit distant lands, he composes to sleep when supplies of food are cut off, and he sustains them in their sleep till spring or summer brings them fresh supplies: Is not this a miracle? And if God will work miracles for the preservation of the fowls of the air, will he not much more, if it be needful, work miracles for the preservation of his people? We are much more important creatures than the fowls. God has formed us with a rational and accountable nature; he has made us to bear his own image, to enjoy his favour, to live in holy and delightful fellowship with him, and to inherit glory and blessedness with him in his kingdom for ever and ever; and will he not take care of us? He so loved the world, that when we were fallen and undone, he gave his only begotten son for our redemption, and can he, who spared not his own son, but delivered him up for us all, refuse to supply us with needful food and raiment? Such thoughts are unworthy of God. It is impossible that we can lack any thing truly desirable, while we walk uprightly.

(To be continued.)

LAWS FOR THE CHURCHES.

We would put the friends of Evangelical Reform on their guard against the practice of making laws. They have no need for any laws but those which are laid down in the New Testament. Let them attend to those, and they will find them quite sufficient. The moment you begin to make laws of your own, you commence your journey back to the old system. And you cannot make laws without causing divisions. The very moment you adopt any law, besides the laws contained in the New Testament, you will split the churches. The members will never be all brought to agree with respect to any human laws. The passing of any human law would separate me from a community at once. I should immediately declare, that I should pay no respect to the law whatever; that I should simply ask what was the will of God on the subject, and do it, without any regard to any laws of men. And the result would be, that they must either allow me to remain with them and despise their laws, which would, in effect, be abolishing the laws, or else they must declare that, with my views and determinations, I must be expelled. I would not place myself under a set of human laws for all the world; nor would I remain in connection with any society with any other understanding but this, that I should govern myself by a regard to the laws of God alone, as laid down in the New Testament, and as revealed to my own mind.

Obj. But how are we to know what the New Testament laws mean?

Ans. By reading and studying them, I should suppose, by conversing on them, and by offering up our prayers to God. "If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him." Making a heap of laws of your own will not help you to understand the meaning of the New Testament; it would tend to prevent you from understanding them. Having a lot of laws of your own, would prevent you from reading and studying the New Testament laws, from conversing on them, and from seeking illumination from heaven. Human laws supplant the laws of the New Testament, and make them of no effect.

Obj. But there are some cases for which the laws of the New Testament do not make provision.

Ans. Then they are cases for which no provision was necessary.

Obj. Nay, there are cases of very great importance, for which the New Testament makes no provision If a man should get drunk, for instance, where is the law in the New Testament which requires a church immediately to expel such a man?

Ans. If there be no law in the New Testament authorizing us immediately to expel such a man, it would not be right immediately to expel him. There are laws plenty in the New Testament authorizing a church to expel a man that gets drunk, if he does not repent and return to the right way; and that is enough. We do not need any laws to bind us to be unfeeling and severe. If a man be overtaken in a fault, the business of the church is not immediately to expel him, but to try to restore him in the spirit of meekness. It is soon enough to expel him, when our endeavours to restore him have proved unsuccessful.

Obj. But how are we to know what are the duties of the officers of the church?

Ans. Are they not plainly enough laid down in the New Testament? Can you tell me a single duty of any officer, which is not enjoined in the New Testament? I know none. In fact, if a thing is not enjoined in the New Testament in one way or other, that, of itself, is a proof that it is not a duty.

Obj. But might it not be well to collect the laws of the New Testament, and put them in order, and print them, that it might be more easy to refer to them?

Ans. I see no objection to that, provided you do not make your collection the law, but only a help to assist you in ascertaining what the law is. Every member of the church might draw up such a collection of the New Testament laws as that, for any thing I can see. But let none of them propose his collection as the law itself. Have as many collections as you please, and explanations too if you think proper, but keep them in their places; do not put them in the place of the book of God. I would recommend every man to make a collection of the New Testament laws for himself, if he has the ability.

Obj. But we ought to have some sort of an understanding.

Ans. Let this be your understanding, that you acknowledge no lawgiver but Christ, and no standard record of his laws but the New Testament.

Obj. But people will not agree about the meaning of the laws of Christ.

Ans. And they will not agree to receive any set of human laws. And they may as well differ about the meaning of Christ's laws, as about the adoption of a number of human laws. Will you make a difference directly by proposing a lot of laws of your own, for fear there should be a difference about the meaning of Christ's laws in a week, a month, or a year to come? If you are afraid of differences, put them off as long as possible. Besides, people may differ about the meaning of your laws, as well as about the meaning of Christ's laws. Human laws are harder to be understood than Christ's laws. By proposing human laws, you secure two occasions of differences, instead of one. But I do not believe that good people would differ so much about the meaning of Christ's laws, if they had no other laws to blind their minds. Just make the experiment whether the laws of Christ are sufficient or not. Give them a fair trial. Read them, think about them, talk about them, pray about them, and in trying to reduce them to practice, and to apply them to cases as they turn up, be patient, and see whether you do not find them to answer. I am sure the plan of ruling the church by human laws will not answer, and if the plan of ruling it by Christ's law will not answer, it will be time to give up Christianity as an impracticable system. If churches cannot be properly governed without human laws, the Gospel is a fable, and life is but a dream, and the universe is but a shadow and a delusion. But I believe no such thing. I have no more doubt of the truth of the Gospel, or of the sufficiency of its laws, than I have of my own existence. Let the Gospel be fairly tried, and it will be found to be all that we need, and more than we could ever have imagined.

BEHAVIOUR IN CHURCH MEETINGS, &c.

I hope the friends of Evangelical Reform will be careful to avoid every thing like a disposition to usurp authority over their brethren. Learn to respect each other's views and feelings. Speak gently and affectionately to each other. Don't treat each other's observations as if they were unworthy of notice. Do to each other as you would have others to do to you. If your proposals should be foolish, you would not like them to be answered with a laugh or a sneer; you would like them to be answered respectfully and affectionately. Answer your brother's proposals in the same way. Do not exclaim! Nonsense! Nonsense! Phoh! Phoh! but just point out the error, softly and kindly. And do not be over forward to talk. Pay respect to the advice of the Apostle, "Let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak." James i. 19. It is a painful thing to hear people almost perpetually talking any where; but to hear them almost ceaselessly talking in meetings of the church, is especially painful. And so much talking does no good; it does harm: it wearies people, and it perplexes their minds, and instead of throwing light on subjects, it frequently throws darkness round them. And it almost always comes from a wrong disposition. Persons that talk so much, are almost always anxious to have their own way. They seem to think that nothing will be done exactly as it ought, unless it be done according to their proposals. They think too highly of themselves, and too meanly of their brethren. They have no confidence in any one's judgment but their own: they seem as if they supposed that the Spirit of wisdom was with themselves alone. This is a faulty disposition, it is the very soul of intolerance, and it cannot fail to disturb the church whenever it is indulged. If you find any such disposition in your souls, check it at once. Learn to believe that the Spirit of wisdom may dwell in others as well as in you. Suspect yourself of self-will, if nothing can please you but the adoption of your own suggestions. Suspect yourself of pride, if you cannot think the church can stand or prosper, unless its affairs be all directed according to your proposals. When you find such thoughts and feelings as these intruding themselves into your soul, sit down, seal up your lips, and never open them again, except for prayer, till the evil spirit is cast out.

Don't dispute in your church meetings. "Do all things without murmurings and disputings." Phil. 2. xiv. It is right that each one should freely express his views on any subject, but disputation, eager contending which shall gain a majority of votes in favour of his proposal, is wrong. Aim at bringing all to think alike on every measure, not at obtaining a majority. A free expression of our views, and a friendly interchange of sentiment, is all right, but all such disputes as partake of the nature of strife or contention, all such disputation as shows a determination to controul or rule the minds of our brethren, is altogether wrong.

Accustom yourselves, in your endeavours to do good, to act on your own responsibility, as individuals. Do not put off doing what you see ought to be done, until the whole church is prepared to take part with you; but set to work yourselves, on your own responsibility, and leave your Christian friends to act as may seem best to them. I do not think it is always proper to ask *churches* to take up plans for doing good. A church consists generally of persons of all ages and of all degrees of understanding; it is too much to expect a multitude of minds so variously furnished, and so differently affected, to be prepared to enter upon any one way of doing good. The proper course is, when we have any benevolent object to accomplish, to lay it before our brethren, and ask the help of such as approve of it, and are disposed to help it. If funds are wanted, don't ask aid of the church, as a body, but solicit funds from such members as are favourable to the undertaking. If the church should as a body be willing to render assistance, you can accept it; but do not depend on such assistance. Act as individuals, and leave others free to do the same.

It may be very desirable to send a missionary to Germany, but it may not appear desirable to the whole of the church. Some members of the church may think it would be much better to send a missionary to France. What shall be done in such a case? Simply this; let those who believe themselves called to send a missionary to Germany, send one to Germany, and let those who believe themselves called upon to send a missionary to France, send one to France; and let those who do not consider themselves called upon to do either, employ their powers and resources in serving God and benefitting their fellow-men in such other ways as may seem best to them.

PROTESTANT POPERY;

OR THE POPERY OF PROTESTANTS.

"First, then, it is said of Papists, that they ascribe an infallibility to the Pope, so that if he were to say one thing and the Bible another, his authority would carry it over the authority of God. And think you, my brethren, that there is no such Popery among you? Is there no taking of your religion upon trust from another, when you should draw it fresh and unsullied from the fountain head of inspiration? You all have, or you ought to have, Bibles; and how often is it repeated there, "Hearken diligently unto me?" Now, do you obey this requirement by making the reading of your Bibles a distinct and earnest exercise? Do you ever dare to bring your favourite minister to the tribunal of the word, or would you tremble at the presumption of such an attempt, so that the hearing of the word carries a greater authority over your mind than the reading of the word? Now this want of daring, this trembling at the very idea of a dissent from your minister, this indolent acquiescence in his doctrine, is just calling another man master; it is putting the authority of man over the authority of God; it is throwing yourself into a prostrate attitude at the footstool of infallibility; it is not just kissing the toe of reverence, but it is the profounder degradation of the mind, and all its faculties: and without the name of Popery—that name which lights up so ready an antipathy in your bosoms,—your souls may be infected with the substantial poison, and your conscience be weighed down with the oppressive shackles of Popery. And all this in the noon-day effulgence of a Protestant country, where the Bible, in your mother tongue, circulates among all your families—where it may be met with on almost every shelf, and is ever soliciting you to look to the wisdom that is inscribed upon its pages. O! how tenderly should we deal with the prejudices of a rude and uneducated people, who have no Bible, and no art of reading among them, to unlock its treasures, when we think that, even in this our land, the voice of human authority carries so mighty an influence along with it, and veneration for the word of God is darkened and polluted by a blind veneration for its interpreters.

"But, again, it is said of Papists that they hold the monstrous doctrine of transubstantiation. Now a doctrine may be monstrous on two grounds. It may be monstrous on the ground of its absurdity, or it may be monstrous on the ground of its impiety. It must have a most practically mischievous effect on the conscience, should a communicant sit down at the table of the Lord; and think that the act of appointed remembrance is equivalent to a real sacrifice, and a real expiation; and eave the performance with a mind unburdened of all its past guilt, and resolve to incur fresh guilt to be wiped away by a fresh expiation. But in the sacraments of our own country, is there no crucifying of the Lord afresh? Is there none of that which gives the doctrine of transubstantiation all its malignant influence on the hearts and lives of its proselytes? Is there no mysterious virtue annexed to the elements of this ordinance? Instead of being repaired to for the purpose of recruiting our languid affections to the Saviour, and strengthening our faith, and arming us with a firmer resolution, and more vigorous purpose of obedience, does the conscience of no communicant solace itself by the mere performance of the outward act, and suffer him to go back, with a more reposing security, to the follies, and vices, and indulgences of the world? Then, my brethren, his erroneous views of the sacrament may not be clothed in a term so appalling to the hearts and the feelings of Protestants as transubstantiation, but to it belongs all the immorality of transubstantiation; and the thorn must be pulled out of his eye, ere he can see clearly to cast the mote out of his brother's eye.

"But, thirdly, it is said that Papists worship saints, and fall down to graven images. This is very, very bad. 'Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.' But let us take ourselves to task upon this charge also. Have we no consecrated names in the annals of reformation—no worthies who hold too commanding a place in the remembrance and affection of Protestants? Are there no departed theologians, whose works hold too domineering an ascendency over the faith and practice of Christians? Are there no laborious compilations of other days, which, instead of interpreting the Bible, have given its truths a shape, and a form, and an arrangement, that confer upon them another impression, and impart to them another influence, from the pure and original record? We may not bend the knee in any sensible chamber of imagery, at the remembrance of favourite saints. But do we not bend the understanding before the volumes of favourite authors, and do an homage to those representations of the minds of the men of other days, which should be exclusively given to the representation of the mind of the Spirit, as put down in the book of the Spirit's revelations? It is right that each of us should give the contribution of his own talents, and his own learning, to this most interesting cause; but let the great drift of our argument be to prop the authority of the Bible, and to turn the eye of earnestness upon its pages; for if any work, instead of exalting the Bible, shall be made, by the misjudging reverence of others, to stand in its place, then we introduce a false worship into the heart of a reformed country, and lay prostrate the consciences of men, under the yoke of a spurious authority.

"But, fourthly, and lastly, it is stated, that by forms of confession, in the last days of a sinner's life, and the ministration of extreme unction upon his death-bed, he may be sent securely to another world, with all the unrepented profligacy, and fraud, and wickedness, of this world, upon his forehead: that this is looked forward to, and counted upon by every Catholic,—and sets him loose from all those anticipations which work upon the terror of other men,—and throws open to him an unbridled career, through the whole of which he may wanton in all the varieties of criminal indulgence,—and, at length, when death knocks at his door, if he just allows him time to send for his minister, and to hurry along with him, through the steps of an adjusted ceremonial, the man's passage through that dark vale which carries him out of the world, is strewed with the promises of delusion.

"O! my brethren, it is piteous to think of such a preparation, but it is just such a preparation as meets the sad experience of us all. The man whose every affection has clung to the world, till the last hour of his possibility to enjoy it; who never put forth an effort or a prayer to be delivered from the power of sin, till every faculty for its pleasures had expired; who, through the varied progress of his tastes and his desires, from amusement to dissipation, and from dissipation to business; had always a something in all the successive stages of his career, to take up his heart to the exclusion of him who formed it;—why, such a man, who never thought of pressing the lessons of his minister upon his conscience while life was vigorous, and the full swing of its delights and acceptations could be indulged in, —do we never find, even in the bosom of this reformed country, that while his body retains all its health, his spirit retains all its hardihood? and not till the arrival of that week, or that month, or that year, when the last messenger begins to alarm him, does he think of sending to the man of God, a humble supplicant for his attendant prayers. Ah! my brethren, do you not think, amid the tones and sympathies, and the tears which an affectionate pastor pours out in the fervency of his soul, and mingles with all his petitions, and all his addresses to the dying man, that no flattering unction ever steals upon him, to lull his conscience, and soothe the agony of his departure? Then, my brethren, you mistake it, you sadly mistake it; and, even here, where I lift up my voice among a crowd of men, in the prime and unbroken vigour of their days,—if even the youngest and likeliest of you all, shall, trusting to some future repentance, cherish the purpose of sin another hour, and not resolve, at this critical and important *Now*, to break it all off, by an act of firm abandonment, then be your abhorrence at Popery what it may, you are exemplifying the worst of its errors, and wrapping yourselves up in the cruellest and most inveterate of its delusions."

AWFUL EFFECTS OF FILIAL DISOBEDIENCE.

In the year 1738, Mr. Wesley received a letter from a friend in Lincolnshire, entreating him to serve the church of a Mr. Hume, some time before deceased, during its vacancy. Mr. Wesley, reading the letter, inquired of one of his Lincolnshire friends, whether Mr. Hume was dead? "Have you not been informed of the calamities of that family?" replied his friend. "I have not," said Mr. Wesley. "I will then," said he, "relate them to you."

Mr. Hume had four sons and one daughter. Three of the sons were educated at Oxford, and entered into holy orders; the other went into the Guinea trade, and settled on the coast of Africa.

About nine months ago, Mr. Hume was riding out, and watering his horse at a large pond, the unruly beast plunged out of his depth; by which Mr. Hume was so wetted that he caught a violent cold, which was followed by a fever, that caused his death. The person who had the gift of Mr. Hume's living, was determined that it should remain in the family as long as possible, and therefore gave the eldest son a presentation to it. Mr. Hume, the father, had just rebuilt the parsonage house before he died. The son took possession before it was dry, and the dampness of it occasioned his speedy death. The second son was then presented to the living; and he died also a few weeks after his induction. The third son (his brother dying suddenly) set off from Oxford to receive the presentation. In his way he lay at the house of an old acquaintance of his father's. The gentleman of the house had a beautiful daughter, with whom young Mr. Hume immediately fell in love. He, therefore, before he departed, begged permission to return and make proposals; to which the father consented. Mr. Hume, after his induction to his living, returned, according to his engagement, and in a few days the marriage was completed; but in six weeks after the nuptials, the lady was brought to bed; and Mr. Hume, soon afterwards, died with grief. The conclusion of this mournful episode should not be omitted. Mrs. Hume, soon after the death of her third son, received a letter from the only remaining one, informing her, he was just going to sail from Africa to England with a fortune sufficient to make the whole family comfortable; and, in a few days after, she received a letter from the captain of a swift-sailing vessel, who had been hailed by the ship in which her son sailed, by whom she was informed that her son had died on his passage of a disorder which then raged in the ship. Mrs. Hume, sinking under the weight of such a complication of misfortunes, soon died of a broken heart. Miss Hume, about a month after the death of her mother, was in company with a physician, who, looking stedfastly at her, observed, "Madam, you take opium, I know it by your eyes, and I am afraid you have put it out of my power to recover you." She confessed that the misfortunes of her family had so entirely deprived her of rest, that she had taken laudanum to obtain a little repose. The physician prescribed. In a fortnight she recovered her appetite, her colour, and in a good measure her health. The physician then advised her to take a table-spoonful of jalap he had prescribed for her, whenever she found herself inclined to be sick. A few days after this, she desired the servant to bring her a spoonful of the jalap. The servant mistaking the bottle of laudanum for the jalap, brought her a spoonful of the laudanum, which she drank; and soon afterwards she fell asleep, and awoke no more. When Mr. Wesley received information of the death of the last of the family, he recollected a remarkable observation made to him by his mother many years before. He had been commending to her, in very strong terms, Mr Hume and his amiable family. "John," replied Mrs. Wesley, "depend upon it, that family will come to some untimely end." Mrs. Wesley was a woman so far from being given to censure, that Mr. Wesley asked, with some surprise, "Madam, why do you speak so severely of so lovely a family?" "John," said she, "I will tell you why: I have observed, in various instances, in the course of my life, that where persons have grossly violated the fifth commandment, "Honour thy father and mother," &c. and afterwards have been brought to the fear of God, the Lord has reversed the promise, and punished them for their transgression with temporal death. Mr. Hume and his family lie under this censure. I remember the time when his mother lived under his roof; he used her cruelly. He grudged every bit of meat she put into her mouth, and the whole family partook of his spirit. And depend upon it, God will remember them for this."

INTELLIGENCE.

On Sunday, Dec. 5th, the Friends of Evangelical Reform at Tunstall, opened their New Chapel. The place is eighteen yards long, and nine wide, and built in such a way, that it can easily be turned into four dwelling houses. Samuel Sayce, of Stalybridge, preached on the Sabbath, and on the Monday evening; and on the evenings of Wednesday and Thursday following, J. Barker preached in the same place. On Tuesday, the 14th, William Trotter preached in the same place. The attendance on the services was good, and the services were truly profitable and encouraging.

On Friday, the 10th, J. Barker lectured at Macclesfield on Temperance, in the National School Room. The audience was unusually large, and the principles of Temperance appeared to take hold of many minds. A number of persons at Macclesfield had endeavoured to prejudice the minds of the Temperance Friends against the lecturer; and had even gone to the Temperance Meeting, when they found that Joseph Barker was announced to visit Macclesfield, and distributed a number of the scurrilous and abusive pamphlets published against him by his persecutors; but all appeared to be overruled for good. Instead of preventing people from coming to hear, their conduct excited people's curiosity, and caused the attendance to be larger than the friends had looked for. It is expected that J. Barker will visit Macclesfield shortly to lecture on Evangelical Reform.

On Sunday, December 12th, the preaching-room fitted up by our Christian friends at Manchester was publicly opened. J. Barker preached in the morning and evening, and after the evening service addressed the friends on the principles of Christian Fellowship, the Duties of Christian Churches, &c., and then administered to the members of the church the Lord's Supper. The congregations were very large, though the day was exceedingly wet; and at night, the room was crowded, and several, we understand, were unable to get in. It had been circulated that the room was unsafe; but it does not appear that many were prevented by these reports from attending. On Tuesday evening, the 14th, J. Barker lectured in the same room, on the Doctrine of the New Testament respecting the acquisition and use of property. On Thursday evening the friends had a tea meeting in the room, and after tea, a public meeting for the statement and inculcation of the principles of Evangelical Reform. From four to five hundred persons, it was supposed, sat down to eat and drink together, while the number attending the meeting afterwards was still greater. The meeting was addressed by J. B. Sheppard, of Bury, minister of the Wesleyan Methodist Association, by Samuel Tucker, of Manchester, Samuel Fox, Manchester, and by J. Barker. The people were exceedingly attentive, and apparently much interested and profited. The services altogether were of a very encouraging and satisfactory character.

On Monday evening the 13th Dec. J. Barker preached at Lees, near Mossley. The room, which is calculated to hold about four hundred, was crowded, and the blessing of the Lord rested delightfully upon the meeting.

On Wednesday the 15th Dec., J. Barker lectured in Oak-street chapel, Manchester, on Christian Liberty.

On Tuesday evening the 21st Dec., J. Barker lectured in the Union Hall, Barnardcastle, on Temperance, and on the Wednesday evening following he lectured, in the same place, on Evangelical Reform. The audience was much larger the second evening than the first, and the interest excited was very considerable. A number of friends in Barnardcastle and the neighbourhood appear to be fully convinced, that if Christianity is to become the religion of the whole earth, professing Christians must themselves carry out the principles of the Gospel much more thoroughly and consistently than they have hitherto done. And there appears to be a disposition among the Barnardcastle friends, to begin the work of reform at home. Several have taken a further step or two in the way of temperance and self-denial, and others have withdrawn from worldly associatians, and transferred their trust from uncertain riches to the living God. A spirit of ardent, enterprising charity also appears to have taken possession of their breasts. The proposal to issue a number of new tracts meets their approbation, and receives support. We have to acknowledge the receipt of two pounds through the medium of W, Rowntree for the tract project, with the kind assurance that a further sum can be raised if required. We hope to make a return in tracts shortly

A new chapel has been lately opened, by the friends of Evangelical Reform, at Washerwall, near the Staffordshire Potteries, but we have not heard the particulars. We expect to be furnished with an account of W. Trotter's late labours in Staffordshire and elsewhere for our next number; meanwhile we give the following, which has just reached us.

"William Trotter has been in this neighbourhood nine days, and has preached sixteen sermons, led a love-feast, and delivered two lectures, one on Religious Reform, and the other on Temperance, to very large congregations. All the places were well filled, most of them to overflowing; and much, very much good has attended his visit: there are many that will never forget it till their dying day. The Pottery friends are doing well; they seem to live in each other's affections; and they pull one way. There are many victims,* but they suffer willingly; they hope to stand fast, and quit themselves like men, for God and truth. William Trotter was in good spirits, and happy in his work. He lives in the affections of the Pottery friends."

On Christmas day the Trustees of Salem Chapel had a tea party, and after tea, a public meeting was held. It was one of the largest meetings of the kind they ever had, and without exception, we believe, the most delightful and profitable. The meeting was addressed on the true principles of church-fellowship,—the folly of attempting to force people into a uniformity of opinion or practice,—the true nature of Christian liberty, and the true principles of Christian discipline and church order. Much also was said on the ends which churches are designed by God to answer,—on the obligations of churches, while they maintain their freedom, to cherish kind feelings, and affectionate intercourse with other churches,—on the duty of all Christians who make it their great aim to exemplify and to propagate the whole religion of Christ, throughout all the nations of the earth. The church in connection with Salem Chapel is still favoured with prosperity, and the most encouraging prospects are before it. May its members and its pastor be faithful to the solemn trust reposed in them by their Heavenly Father.

The Gateshead Friends had their Quarterly Meeting on Monday: they too are favoured with prosperity. God has honoured them, and sanctioned the steps they have taken in the cause of Evangelical Reform, by making them the instruments of converting many souls. In Gateshead they have added to the church from thirty to forty, we are told, and the number added in the circuit generally is upwards of seventy or eighty, we believe.

We have heard, through a correspondent, very strange news from the neighbourhood of Dudley. Since J. Barker was in that neighbourhood, Amos Dyson, one of the preachers of the Methodist New Connexion, in the Dudley circuit, has been brought to trial and suspended. Among the charges preferred against him were, that he had invited J. Barker and W. Trotter to his house to dinner,—that he had been seen walking with them in the street,—that he had been with them at J. Brown's, Dudley, at T. Fellows's, Pennsnett,—that he had said he had read J. Barker's works on a Sunday,—and a number of others of a similar character. We hope a full account of the case will be published. It is but right that the Christian world should know what awful things are done under the Protestant name. The case of A. Dyson is one that deserves the attention of every Protestant in the world. Perhaps there is hardly such an instance, such an exemplification of the principles of intolerance to be found in the history of persecution, not even in connection with Popery itself. We have read of nothing in the history of A. Kilham, nor even in the pamphlets of T. Allin against the Wesleyan Conference one-hundredth part so bad. We never thought so favourably of the Wesleyan body as we have done, since we were led to contrast their proceedings towards dissentient members and ministers amongst themselves, with the accounts furnished by our Dudley correspondent and others. A. Dyson is a laborious and a useful minister, and we have hopes that he willl prove a fellow-labourer in the cause of Evangelical Reform. We have reason to be thankful to God that he so wonderfully liberates his faithful ones, and thrusts them into their proper spheres of labour. While we lament the cruelty which has been practised towards our dear Brother, we rejoice in his emancipation, and in the prospect of his accession to the number of free labourers in the cause of Christ. We are expecting the emancipation of others shortly. There are several that would be glad at once to join our ranks, but they consider it their duty to remain where they are, till Providence shall give them an honourable dismissal. But every thing in its season.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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* Many have been turned from their places, we are informed, for adhering to the cause of Evangelical Reform, and others have been harrassed in other ways by their inconsiderate or unkind opponents.

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